POWER AND SOLIDARITY REVISITED:
THE ACQUISITION AND USE
OF PERSONAL PRONOUNS IN MODERN ENGLISH AND DUTCH

by

SUSAN ANNE BLACKWELL

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Department of English,
School of Humanities
The University of Birmingham

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation applies corpus linguistics techniques to reveal patterns in the acquisition and use of personal pronouns. Setting out from Brown and Gilman's mould-breaking study of "the pronouns of power and solidarity", it argues that their focus on the metaphorical use of plurality in the second-person cannot account for the numerous ways in which canonical pronoun usage is routinely violated by both children and adults. Nonetheless, the concepts of power and solidarity remain productive ones and can help to account for the patterns revealed here.

The first part of the thesis uses data from the CHILDES database to argue that 1st / 2nd person 'reversals' are a common feature of language acquisition which is not unique to children on the autistic spectrum. It also examines pronoun substitutions in the 'caregiver speech' of the mothers and finds a number of differences between the groups studied.

The second part uses original purpose-built corpora of English and Dutch party election broadcasts to explore how power and solidarity are constantly re-negotiated in political discourse. The patterns of pronoun use are discussed in their social context, and it is found that amateur as well as professional politicians are adept at exploiting the pragmatic versatility of pronouns.

DEDICATION

For my parents, Betty and Eric Blackwell

... en ook voor Willem, met wie
het soms moeilijk wordt
te onderscheiden
tussen 'ik' en 'wij'.

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CONTENTS

page:

CHAPTER 1: PROBLEMATISING PRONOUNS 1

1.1 Introduction: the Pronouns of Power and Solidarity 1
1.1.1 Limitations of B&G (I): informants 1
1.1.2 Limitations of B&G (II): uneven historical change 2
1.1.3 Limitations of B&G (III): 3rd person phenomena 4
1.1.4 Limitations of B&G (IV): 1st person phenomena 5
1.1.5 Limitations of B&G (V): Person choice in pronoun use 9
1.1.6 Summary 11

1.2 Linguistic Approaches to Pronouns 12
1.2.1 Transformational Generative Grammar 12
1.2.2 Speech Act Theory 13
1.2.3 Text Analysis 15
1.2.4 Corpus-based approaches 16

1.3 The Aims of This Study 17

Endnotes 20

Section A: Acquisition of Personal Pronouns

CHAPTER 2: THE AUTISTIC SPECTRUM 21

2.1 Introduction: Origins of the study of autism 21
2.1.1 Kanner's 'Early Infantile Autism' 21
2.1.2 Asperger's Syndrome 24
2.1.3 'Theory of Mind' 25
2.1.4 Other Theories 27

2.2 Detecting and Diagnosing Autism 28
2.2.1 Confounding factors: mental handicap 28
2.2.2 Wing's Triad 28
2.2.3 Pretend Play 29
2.2.4 Emotional Impairment 30
2.2.5 Lack of Central Coherence 31

2.3 Possible Causes of Autism 31
2.3.1 'Psychogenic' factors 31
2.3.2 Genetic factors 33
2.3.3 Opiates 34
2.3.4 Vaccines 34
2.3.5 Hearing disorders 35
2.3.6 Epilepsy 36
2.3.7 Other possible factors 36
2.3.8 Autism and Handedness 38

2.4 Autism and Schizophrenia 39

2.5 Summary 42

Endnotes 44

CHAPTER 3: PRONOUN USAGE WITHIN THE AUTISTIC SPECTRUM 46

3.1 Pronoun usage by individuals with Early Infantile Autism 46
3.1.1 Kanner's description of autistic pronoun usage 47
3.1.2 Early Dutch accounts: Van Krevelen, Prick 49
3.1.3 More recent accounts 50

3.1.4 Jordan 50
3.1.4.1 Experiment 1: 1st and 2nd person pronouns 50
3.1.4.2 Experiment 2: 3rd person pronouns 53
3.1.4.3 Observational findings 55
3.1.4.4 Other findings 55

3.1.5 Summary 56

3.2 Pronoun usage by individuals with Aspergers' Syndrome 56

3.3 Why do autistic children produce pronoun 'reversals'? 59
3.3.1 No concept of self / Rejection of self 59
3.3.2 Part of echolalia 61
3.3.3 General tendency to reverse words 63
3.3.4 General tendency to assign fixed meanings to words 63
3.3.5 Difficulties with turn-taking and speaker roles 65
3.3.6 Summary 67

3.4 At what age or stage of development do the 'reversals' cease? 67

3.5 Is Pronoun 'Reversal' found in Other Disorders? 71
3.5.1 Schizophrenia 72
3.5.2 Semantic Pragmatic Language Disorder 74
3.5.3 Down Syndrome 74
3.5.4 Visual Impairment 77

3.6 Summary 77

Endnotes 78

CHAPTER 4: NORMALLY-DEVELOPING CHILDREN'S ACQUISITION OF PRONOUNS 79

4.1 Introduction 79
4.1.1 Pronoun acquisition in normally-developing children 79
4.1.1.1 Age and MLU 80
4.1.1.2 Order of Acquisition: English 80
4.1.1.3 Order of Acquisition: Dutch 83
4.1.1.4 Other Languages 85
4.1.1.5 Pronoun Errors and 'Reversals' 86

4.1.2 Cognitive pre-requisites for pronoun acquisition 89
4.1.3 Pronoun 'reversals' in normally-developing children 89

4.2 Parental pronoun modification: chicken or egg? 93
4.2.1 The emergence of the motherese hypothesis 93
4.2.2 Sources of CDS features 95
4.2.3 Semantic and Pragmatic aspects of CDS 96
4.2.4 Pronouns in Child-Directed Speech 97
4.2.4.1 A study of BT Pronouns: Wills 98
4.2.4.2 Other aspects of CDS Pronouns 102
4.2.4.3 Why should carers modify or avoid pronouns in CDS? 104

4.3 Evidence of children's difficulties with pronouns 105
4.3.1 Avoidance 105
4.3.2 Reversals: a case study of a pronoun-reversing child 106
4.3.3 Other deictic errors 108
4.3.4 Deixis problems in L2 acquisition 109

4.4 Summary 111

Endnotes 112

CHAPTER 5: A CORPUS-BASED INVESTIGATION OF CHILDREN'S AND PARENTS' USE OF PRONOUNS 114

5.1 Introduction 114

5.2 The CHILDES Corpus 117

5.3 Methodology 118
5.3.1 Software and Corpora 118
5.3.2 Selection of corpora 118
5.3.2.1 Non-language impaired subjects 118
5.3.2.2 Language-impaired Subjects 123

5.3.3 Procedure 128

5.3.4 Objectives of the corpus research 132
5.3.4.1 Research Questions 132
5.3.4.2 Hypotheses 133

5.3.5 Method of Analysis 134

5.4 Findings: Child Pronoun Usage in the Childes Corpus 140
5.4.1 Introduction 140

5.4.2 Order of acquisition 140
5.4.2.1 Manchester 141
5.4.2.2 Groningen 142
5.4.2.3 Flusberg Autistic 145
5.4.2.4 Flusberg Downs Syndrome 150

5.4.3 Children's Deviant Pronouns 150
5.4.3.1 Manchester 151
5.4.3.2 Groningen 155
5.4.3.3 Flusberg autistic 157
5.4.3.4 Flusberg Down Syndrome 159

5.4.4 Mothers' Deviant Pronouns 160
5.4.4.1 Manchester 161
5.4.4.2 Groningen 165
5.4.4.3 Flusberg autistic 170
5.4.4.4 Flusberg Down Syndrome 174

5.5 Summary 177

Endnotes 180

Section B: Use of Personal Pronouns

CHAPTER 6: POLITICIANS' USE OF PRONOUNS 182

6.1 Introduction 182
6.2 Pronouns in political discourse 182
6.3 Choice of data: Party Election Broadcasts 186

6.4 Pronoun Choices available to politicians 189
6.4.1 'I' versus 'we' 189
6.4.2 'one' / 'men' 193
6.4.3 'you' 193
6.4.4 2nd person T (familiar) versus V (polite) 195
6.4.5 Third-person forms 195

Endnotes 197

CHAPTER 7: ELECTIONS AND ELECTION BROADCASTS 198

7.1 The British Parliamentary System 198
7.1.1 'First-Past-the-Post' 198
7.1.2 Party Election Broadcasts in the UK 199
7.1.3 The UK data sample 200

7.2 The Dutch Parliamentary System 200
7.2.1 Proportional Representation 200
7.2.2 Party Election Broadcasts in the Netherlands 202
7.2.3 The Dutch Data Sample 203

7.3 The Transcription Process 206
7.3.1 Introductory announcements 206
7.3.2 Written material 207
7.3.3 Spoken material 208
7.3.4 Mark-up conventions 210
7.3.5 Other transcription conventions 211
7.3.6 Abbreviations for Political Parties 212
7.3.7 Difficulties in Transcribing 212

Endnotes 214

CHAPTER 8: RESEARCH FINDINGS ON POLITICIANS'` AND WOULD-BE POLITICIANS' USE OF PRONOUNS 215

8.1 Objectives of the corpus research 215
8.1.1 Research Questions 215
8.1.2 Hypotheses 217

8.2 Findings 218
8.2.1. Similarities between different parties and individuals 219
8.2.2 'we' used on a class basis by the left? 220
8.2.3 'we' used on a national, ethnic or age basis by 'identity' parties? 221
8.2.4 Slippery pronouns: Who are 'we'? 223
8.2.5 'them' versus 'us' 224
8.2.6 Use of 'ik' and 'I' 226
8.2.7 'jij' versus 'u' 229
8.3 Summary 231

Endnotes 233

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION 234

Appendices 240
Bibliography 261

LIST OF FIGURES

page

1.1 Extracts from the London-Lund Corpus 7

4.1 Family conversation (data from Charles Owen) 90
4.2 Eleven categories of Baby Talk Reference Terms (adapted from Wills 1977). 99
4.3 Systematic errors made by Mark acquiring Dutch (adapted from Van der Geest 1977). 107

5.1 MLU scores for the Manchester subjects 147
5.2 MLU scores for the Groningen subjects 147
5.3 MLU scores for the Flusberg autistic subjects 148
5.4 MLU scores for the Flusberg DS subjects 148

LIST OF TABLES

page

1.1 Figures from the London-Lund Corpus, by sex of speaker 8
1.2 Personal pronouns in German and Dutch: standard nominative forms. 11

5.1 Final selection of subjects from the Manchester corpus. 126
5.2 Final selection of subjects from the Groningen corpus. 126-7
5.3 Final selection of subjects from the Flusberg Autistic corpus. 127
5.4 Final selection of subjects from the Flusberg Down Syndrome corpus. 128

5.5 Coding of pronouns and proper nouns 134-138
5.6 Coding matrix for pronoun 'errors' 138

5.7 Order of acquisition of pronouns in the Manchester corpus 141
5.8 Order of acquisition of pronouns in the Groningen corpus 142
5.9 Order of acquisition of pronouns in the Flusberg autistic corpus 145
5.10 Order of acquisition of pronouns in the Flusberg Down Syndrome corpus 150

5.11 Deviant child pronouns in the Manchester corpus 151
5.12 Deviant child pronouns in the Groningen corpus 155
5.13 Deviant child pronouns in the Flusberg Autistic corpus 157
5.14 Deviant child pronouns in the Flusberg Down Syndrome corpus 159

5.15 Deviant maternal pronouns in the Manchester corpus 161
5.16 Deviant maternal pronouns in the Groningen corpus 165
5.17 Deviant maternal pronouns in the Flusberg Autistic corpus 170
5.18 Deviant maternal pronouns in the Flusberg Down Syndrome corpus 174

7.1 Dutch Party Election Broadcasts in the data sample 205

8.1 Groupings of political parties 216

LIST OF APPENDICES
(at the end of the thesis unless stated to be on the CD-ROM)

		page
5.1	English language corpora in CHILDES	240
5.2	Dutch language corpora in CHILDES	242
5.3	'epronouns' file used to extract pronouns from English data	243
5.4	'dpronouns' file used to extract pronouns from Dutch data	245
5.5	Coding criteria used in analysing pronouns used by children and mothers in the CHILDES corpus.	247
5.6	Excel spreadsheets for 'confusion matrices'	CD
6.1	"Come off the fence now" speech by Paul Mackney	250
7.1	Web pages from the http://www.nederlandkiest.nl site 2002	CD
7.2	Distribution of seats following the general elections in the Netherlands of 2002 and 2003.	252
7.3	Transcription conventions for UK PEBs	253
7.4	Transcription conventions for NL PEBs	254
7.5	Corpus of English PEBs	CD
7.6	Corpus of Dutch PEBs	CD
8.1	Summary of Pronoun usage in the UK PEBs	255
8.2	Summary of Pronoun usage in the Dutch PEBs	257

ABBREVIATIONS

I have adopted abbreviations for frequently-used bibliographic references and technical terms. These are glossed in the text at the point of first mention, but I list them here for ease of reference. Abbreviations used for political parties in the UK and the Netherlands are listed separately in chapter 6.

3P	Third-person form, including pronouns and noun phrases.
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
AS	Asperger's Syndrome
B&G	Brown and Gilman (1960)
BT	Baby Talk, i.e. talk by adults to babies. (Ferguson 1977; cp. TB)
BTPh	Baby Talk Phonetics (Cruttenden 1994)
CDS	Child-Directed Speech (also called BT and motherese)
CHAT	**C**odes for the **H**uman **A**nalysis of **T**ranscripts (MacWhinney 2000a, 2000b).
CHILDES	CHIld Language Data Exchange System (MacWhinney 1995, 2000a, 2000b).
CLAN	**C**omputerized **L**anguage **AN**alysis (MacWhinney 2000a, 2000b).
DC	Defence Counsel (in court)
DS	Down Syndrome
EDD	Eye-Direction Detector (Baron-Cohen 1989b)
EIA	Early Infantile Autism (also called Kanner-type Autism)
F	Flusberg Corpus (FA = autistic; FD = Down Syndrome)
FD	Foreigner Discourse (Wesche 1994)
FT	Foreigner Talk (Ferguson 1971)
G	Groningen Corpus
ICE	International Corpus of English
ICE-GB	The British component of ICE (Nelson et al. 2002)
ID	Intentionality Detector (Baron-Cohen 1989b)
LD	Learning Difficulties
LLC	The London-Lund Corpus of Spoken English (Svartvik ed. 1990)
M	Manchester Corpus
M&H	Mühlhäusler and Harré (1990)

MLU	Mean Length of Utterance
PC	Prosecuting Counsel (in court)
PEB	Party Election Broadcast
POS	Part of Speech
PPERA	Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000
R	Receiver
RPA	Representation of the People Act 1983
S	Sender
SAM	Shared Attention Mechanism (Baron-Cohen 1989b)
SEU	Survey of English Usage
SLI	Specific Language Impairment
SPLD	Semantic-Pragmatic Language Disorder
T	the 'familiar' (originally singular) second-person pronoun (from the Latin *tu*: Brown and Gilman 1960). Cp. *V*.
TB	Talk by Babies (Ferguson 1977; cp. BT.)
TGG	Transformational Generative Grammar
ToM	Theory of Mind
V	the 'polite' (originally plural) second-person pronoun (from the Latin *vos*: Brown and Gilman 1960). Cp. *T*.

Note on Translations

Translations from Dutch or other languages are my own unless otherwise stated. I have endeavoured to convey the illocutionary and pragmatic force of the original in each case and have consequently employed idiomatic rather than 'literal' renderings.

Note on use of Quotation Marks

My practice in this thesis has been to use double quotation marks for direct quotations from the academic literature (e.g. Asperger viewed autism as a "constitutional" disorder), and single quotation marks for examples from my data, cited lexical items ('I', 'you'), terms in general use by more than one author ('theory of mind') and terms which I wish to problematise (pronoun 'reversals').

CHAPTER 1: PROBLEMATISING PRONOUNS

> "What appears to be a 'syntactic' phenomenon cannot actually be satisfactorily explained syntactically."
>
> (Wales 1996:xii)

1.1 Introduction: the Pronouns of Power and Solidarity

In their cross-disciplinary diachronic study of "The Pronouns of Power and Solidarity", Brown and Gilman (1960) (hereafter B&G) identified two principles determining second-person pronoun usage in a number of European languages. Feudal society, they argued, was characterised by the "power semantic": the *T* and *V* forms[1] were exchanged non-reciprocally between persons of unequal social rank, and reciprocally between equals. Thus the nobility in mediaeval Europe gave *T* to the peasantry and received *V* in return; they exchanged *V* among themselves, while the peasants exchanged *T*. The transition to capitalism[2], however, with its concomitant social mobility and superficially egalitarian ideology, has been accompanied by a gradual "shift from power to solidarity as the governing semantic principle" (B&G p. 261), resulting in the extension of the mutual *T* to everyone considered to have common ground with the speaker, leaving mutual *V* to be exchanged with strangers regardless of their status in terms of power.

1.1.1 Limitations of B&G (I): informants

While B&G's paper represented a mould-breaking synthesis of evidence from historical linguistics, sociolinguistics, psychology and literature, it can be, and has been, criticised from a variety of angles (see, for example, Mühlhäusler and Harré 1990:19). The informants questioned by B&G were all upper-middle-class male students resident in Boston in 1957: the pronoun usage of working-class men, or of women of any social class, is not accounted for. The 50 Frenchmen, 20 German men and 11 Italian men surveyed were all at least bilingual (the questionnaire was administered in English). Claims about other languages appear to be made on the basis of data from one or two informants, and are not surprisingly of dubious validity. Whether it is true, for instance, that "the progressive young Indian exchanges the mutual *T* with his wife" (p. 267) depends not only on which Indian language is under scrutiny, but also on what one means by 'progressive':

I have been informed by native speakers of Panjabi that one of the distinguishing features of aspiring 'Puppies' and 'Puppans'[3] is their insistence on exchanging the *V* of pretentiousness. This kind of usage was, indeed, noted by Brown and Gilman in the context of an earlier age:

> "In the drama of seventeenth century France the nobility and bourgeoisie almost always address one another as *V*. This is true even of husband and wife, of lovers, and of parent and child if the child is adult." (B&G p.257)

No doubt the 'Puppy' phenomenon had yet to emerge at the time when Brown and Gilman conducted their research, and in any case they do not cite any Panjabi informants. Their paper was intended to mark but the beginning of an ongoing research project which would in due course test their initial findings against various Indo-European and other unrelated languages (B&G p. 254). Nonetheless they do not seem to have considered that members of a modern industrial society might shift their pronoun usage 'backwards' to serve their social aspirations.

1.1.2 Limitations of B&G (II): uneven historical change

Nor is it true that the shift from power to solidarity has now run its course, even in the languages of Western Europe. One feature of contemporary capitalist society is, as Fairclough (2001:30) puts it, "the tendency of the discourse of social control towards simulated egalitarianism, and the removal of surface markers of authority and power". What this often means in practice with regard to *T/V* pronouns is that, while the non-reciprocal power semantic is no longer used to mark differences of *class*, it is still very much alive in signifying contrasts along other power-type axes such as age. This is the case with modern Dutch, as will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

As for class itself, the picture is often complicated. Progress through B&G's Stages I-IV does not always take place in a steady linear fashion. Consider George Orwell's dramatic account of revolution in Barcelona in December 1936:

> "It was the first time that I had ever been in a town where the working class was in the saddle. Practically every building of any size had been seized by the workers and was draped with red flags or with the red and black flag of the Anarchists; every wall was scrawled with the hammer and sickle and with the initials of the revolutionary parties; almost every church had been gutted and its images burnt. Churches here and there were being systematically demolished by gangs of workmen. Every shop and café had an inscription saying that it had been collectivized; even the bootblacks had been collectivized and their boxes painted red and black. Waiters and shop-walkers looked you in the face and treated you as an equal. **Servile and even ceremonial forms of speech had temporarily disappeared. Nobody said '*Señor*' or '*Don*' or even '*Usted*'; everyone called everyone else 'Comrade' and 'Thou', and said '*Salud*!' instead of '*Buenos días*'.** Tipping was forbidden by law; almost my first experience was receiving a lecture from a hotel manager for trying to tip a lift-boy. There were no private motor-cars, they had all been commandeered, and all the trams and taxis and much of the other transport were painted red and black. The revolutionary posters were everywhere, flaming from the walls in clean reds and blues that made the few remaining advertisements look like daubs of mud."
>
> (Orwell 1966: 8-9, my emphasis)

By April 1937, however, the revolution had been defeated and the concomitant social and linguistic changes had been reversed:

> "Now things were returning to normal. The smart restaurants and hotels were full of rich people wolfing expensive meals, while for the working-class population food-prices had jumped enormously without any corresponding rise in wages. Apart from the expensiveness of everything, there were recurrent shortages of this and that, which, of course, always hit the poor rather than the rich. The restaurants and hotels seemed to have little difficulty in getting whatever they wanted, but in the working-class quarters the queues for bread, olive oil, and other necessaries were hundreds of yards long. Previously in Barcelona I had been struck by the absence of beggars; now there were quantities of them. Outside the delicatessen shops at the top of the Ramblas gangs of barefooted children were always waiting to swarm round anyone who came out and clamour for scraps of food. **The 'revolutionary' forms of speech were dropping out of use. Strangers seldom addressed you as *tú* and *camarada* nowadays; it was usually *señor* and *usted*. *Buenos días* was beginning to replace *salud*.** The waiters were back in their boiled shirts and the shop-walkers were cringing in the familiar manner. My wife and I went into a hosiery shop on the Ramblas to buy some stockings. The shopman bowed and rubbed his hands as they do not do even in England nowadays, though they used to do it twenty or thirty years ago. In a furtive indirect way the practice of tipping was coming back."
>
> (Orwell, 1966: 110-111, my emphasis)

B&G's account gives the impression of a steadily evolving, irreversible linguistic process; real life, as always, is more complicated. Just as no human society has yet traversed all of Marx and Engel's stages from 'primitive communism' to 'socialism' (Engels 1884), neither has any society yet completed B&G's stages I to IV and eliminated the power principle completely.

1.1.3 Limitations of B&G (III): 3rd person phenomena

B&G established decisively that the choice between what are conventionally described as singular and plural forms of the second person pronoun is not purely one of grammatical number agreement: social factors are also involved. What is not so widely known is that in some languages this phenomenon extends to third person pronouns. Since third person pronouns really *are* pro-nouns, in the sense that they can be interchanged with nominal groups, one might expect the same features to appear in association with actual nouns as well: this expectation is confirmed, as can be illustrated from Panjabi.

Panjabi is an Indo-European language derived from Sanskrit, with considerable influence from Arabic and Persian. It is closely related to Hindi and Urdu. Its second person singular (*T*) form is *t*ũ and the corresponding plural (*V*) is *tuss*ĩ. As with many other languages, the *V* form can also be used as a 'polite' singular. Panjabi is still at the 'power' stage in its development of pronoun pragmatics, with *T* being reserved for inferiors and power-less equals. In addition to the *V* of deference, Panjabi has the all-pervasive *ji*, which can be described as a 'particle of respect' and can be appended to a wide variety of parts of speech including proper names, titles, greetings and even 'yes' and 'no'.

It is not only the use of 'ji' which extends the power semantic in Panjabi beyond second-person pronouns. Social hierarchies (often based on age or seniority) are also reflected in the conventional use of third-person forms. It is not sufficient to show respect when addressing someone: it is also necessary to show respect when talking *about* them. Unfortunately for my purposes, the third person singular and plural pronoun forms are identical, but the following examples should demonstrate that it is the plural which is being used in cases where the speaker wishes to be polite:

(1)	mera	pita	bhot	lumba	he
	my (s.)	*father*	*very*	*tall (s.)*	*is*
(2)	mere	pita-ji	bhot	lumbe	han
	my (pl.)	*father+ji*	*very*	*tall(pl.)*	*are*

'My father is very tall.'

If one asks a native speaker of Panjabi which of (1) and (2) is grammatically correct, one is likely to get the answer that they are *both* grammatically correct, but (1) would be a very rude way of referring to one's father whereas (2) would be polite and thus acceptable. In other words, what a non-native speaker may well perceive as a three-fold number disagreement in (2), involving possessive pronoun, adjective and verb, is not felt as such by native speakers. Corbett and Mtenje (1987:10) note a similar phenomenon in the Chichewa language of Malawi.

Languages which express linguistic politeness in the third person by means of such plural marking provide clear evidence that B&G's account, restricted as it is to European languages and second-person pronouns, does not go far enough.

1.1.4 Limitations of B&G (IV): 1st person phenomena

What Brown and Gilman treated as a phenomenon peculiar to second-person pronouns has been demonstrated to extend to the third person. Could it be possible that even first-person pronoun usage is more complex than is generally thought? One of the reasons B&G gave for the emerging use of *V* to address a single person is the fact that the Roman emperor could refer to himself as 'we':

> "Royal persons sometimes say 'we' where an ordinary man would say 'I'. The Roman emperor sometimes spoke of himself as *nos*, and the reverential *vos* is the simple reciprocal of this."
>
> (B&G p. 255)

B&G demur over whether this early use of the royal 'we' is literal (there were two emperors at the time) or metaphorical, but in either case it seems that the use of singular 'nos' precedes singular 'vos', both chronologically and logically. This would be an interesting historical anecdote if such usage had died with the emperor(s), or with the Latin language. It will be one of the contentions of this thesis, however, that singular 'we' is alive and well in modern English.

I conducted a pilot study of 'I'/'we' in the London-Lund Corpus of Spoken English (LLC) (Svartvik (ed), 1990). As well as lectures, sermons and committee meetings this corpus contains a considerable amount of spontaneous conversation. It is transcribed as fully as possible, including all hesitations, pauses and false starts. It is also available in computer-readable form, enabling easy

and rapid searching and concordancing. Some of the false starts suggested that the speaker was having difficulty in deciding whether to say 'we' or 'I'.

Excluding instances where the 'I' and 'we' were subjects of different clauses,[4] there were 10 instances of I/we indecision in the first 28 texts. Some examples of these are given in Figure 1.1. It could, of course, be argued that the speakers represented here are simply trying to decide what, or whom, to talk about, rather than how to talk about it or them. I consider this to be a facile analysis. To take the example of the lecturer confessing to having violated copyright constraints: she would be perfectly correct to say either 'I' or 'we', since it is equally true that she as an individual and the department as a whole have broken the law on this matter. To argue that she is trying to decide whether to talk about herself or her department is, however, missing the point. It is clear from the rest of her turn that she wants to talk about what she herself has done; the real issue is whether, since what she has done is illegal, she needs to conceal her misdemeanours under the cloak of collective responsibility. It seems that she decides that she can trust her audience sufficiently to come clean about the extent of her own role in the crime, and this confidence proves to be well-founded: one of her interlocutors (b) does the work for her at the end by saying 'everyone does it', which is what speaker A would have been implying had she continued to use 'we'.

S.1.10 A female lecturer, age c. 52
(1975) b (NSB) female academic, age c. 40

```
110 109 8700 1 1 A    11  m -
110 109 8710 1 1 A    12  we m I I xerox a lot of stuff
110 109 8720 2 1 A    22  and
110 109 8730 1 1 b    20  yes
110 109 8720 1 1(A    12  and and and I I photoprint stuff
110 109 8740 1 1 A    11  and get the university printery
110 110 8750 1 1 A    11  to make m me up a sort of
110 110 8760 1 1 A    11  imitation textbook
110 110 8770 1 1 A    11  which is thoroughly illegal
110 110 8780 1 1 A    11  God knows what would happen to me
110 110 8790 1 1 A    11  if I ever got caught
110 110 8800 1 1 b    20  everyone does it ((I imagine
```

S.1.2 A male academic, age c. 43
(1963) B male academic, age c. 42

```
1 2   2  270 1 1(B    11 1  I said ((it was look
1 2   2  290 1 1 B    13 1  I I'm  we're not prepared
1 2   2  300 1 1 B    11 1  to go on being part
1 2   2  310 1 1 B    11 1  I`m not prepared to go on being
1 2   2  320 1 1 B    11 1  part of Yiddish literature
1 2   2  330 2 1 B    22 1  we must hae we're  big enough to
1 2   3  340 1 1 A    11 1  yeah
1 2   3  330 1 1(B    12 1  stand on our own feet now
1 2   3  350 1 1 B    11 1  and this is what Vincent said no about
1 2   3  360 1 1 A    11 1  yes
```

S.2.12 a (NS) female EFL teacher, age c. 25
(1975) A female medical nurse, age 23

```
212  47 4230 1 1 A    11  ((I said nah
212  47 4240 1 1 A    11  let's go and see it
212  47 4250 1 1 A    11  and it was quite funny
212  47 4260 1 1 A    11  we really quite enjoyed it in fact
212  47 4270 1 1 a    20  oh  Time Out's never right
212  47 4280 1 1 A    11  no
212  47 4290 1 1 a/A  20  ( - laugh
212  47 4300 1 2 A    13  I g we we  had already agreed it wasn't
212  47 4300 1 1 A    13  a good thing to go by
212  47 4310 1 1 A    20  but - (  laughs
212  48 4320 1 1 a     20  yeah - - - so you've been seeing him a lot -
212  48 4330 1 1 A    11  ( - coughs no
212  48 4340 1 1 A    11  - ((about once a week
212  48 4350 1 1 a    20  is it all sort of fast and furious - m
212  48 4360 1 1 A    11  no
212  48 4370 1 1 A    11  it's definitely not fast and furious
212  48 4380 1 2 A    11  he's the laziest bugger I've ever come
212  48 4380 1 1 A    11  across
```

Figure 1.1 Extracts from the London-Lund Corpus

We might ask, then, whether some people are more given to using 'we' than others, perhaps because they feel less secure or less assertive and need to bury their individual identity under a collective one. It does seem to have become a radical feminist orthodoxy that women use 'we' more than men do, and use 'I' less. Like much material in feminist linguistics (compare the debate over tag questions), this material could be interpreted either positively or negatively. One could claim, on the one hand, that women are less egotistical than men and have more of a 'collective consciousness'; or one could argue that increased 'we'-usage epitomises women's lack of confidence and their inability to assert themselves as individuals. This issue merits further investigation, beyond the scope of this thesis. However, a preliminary study, again from the LLC, yields the

pattern shown in Table 1.1, which would appear to vitiate the claim that men use a higher proportion of 'I'.

Text no.	Speakers	I	me	my/ mine/ myself	total singular	we	us	our/ ours/ ourselves	total plural
2.6	4 male academics, face-to-face	286	13	18	317 77 %	83	5	5	93 23 %
8.4c	male academic and male friend, telephone	22	2	3	27 79 %	6	1	0	7 21 %
7.3k	male postgrad and male lecturer, telephone	22	4	1	27 90 %	3	0	0	3 10%
1.8	3 female academics, face-to-face	331	13	32	376 97 %	8	1	3	12 3 %
9.1l	female university lecturer and female producer, telephone	84	5	5	94 90 %	11	0	0	11 10 %
9.1j	2 female university secretaries, telephone	95	6	4	105 98 %	2	0	0	2 2 %

Table 1.1 figures from the London-Lund Corpus, by sex of speaker

There are a number of possible ways of explaining these figures. Perhaps the women in these conversations are untypical of the majority of women: they are mostly academics, and even the secretaries are well-educated. Moreover, the LLC material mostly dates back to the 60s and 70s when there were proportionately far fewer female academics than there are today: one might reasonably expect these favoured few to be unusually articulate and assertive. Or perhaps class is a more important factor than sex, and data from working-class women would yield a higher level of 'we'-usage.

On the other hand, linguists might question the assumption that the use of 'I' is a reflection of confidence and power. Utterances like Queen Victoria's "we are not amused" and Margaret Thatcher's "we are a grandmother" are not instances of self-effacing women demonstrating their sisterhood with others of their sex: rather, theirs is the royal 'we', epitomising not only power but

arrogance, often hiding "an egotistical agency" (Wales 1996:64). Perhaps it is 'we', not 'I', which most often indicates social power. This question, too, will be investigated.

The 'we' of power does not have to be the exclusive 'we', combining the first and third persons and excluding the second; the 'inclusive' we, combining the first and second persons, can be more insidious because it pre-empts the interlocutor's possible objections by incorporating him or her into the discourse. In fact, one of the most effective ways of gaining and holding on to power is arguably to conceal one's intentions and actions behind the 'we' of a group or an institution, and to use the inclusive 'we' to convince one's intended victims that they are on the same side as oneself.

It can be confidently asserted that in seeking to investigate plurality as a metaphor for power, we are not dealing with the peculiarities of second-person pronouns in a handful of languages, but with something far more pervasive. Although the thee/you distinction dropped out of English decades ago except in a few regional dialects and the favoured usage of some Quakers, the choice between 'I' and 'we' remains a real one in both spoken and written discourse, and the factors which govern that choice are worthy of serious study.

1.1.5 Limitations of B&G (V): Person choice in pronoun use

Not only does the metaphorical use of plurality pervade all three persons: the choice of person itself can also be metaphorical. In some languages, such as Japanese, politeness towards one's interlocutor is commonly expressed by referring to him or her in the third person; Head (1978) sets out a number of principles for pronoun use, some of which are summarised by Mühlhäusler and Harré (henceforth M&H) as:

> "Respect and/or social distance are shown by choice either of plural form or third person to address one individual. Variation of person, in languages in which both person and number vary indicates greater respect. Respect is mostly displayed to addressee rather than speaker or third person." (M&H p. 19)

Respect and distance, however, are not the only principles involved in pronoun choice. In Japanese, even first-person reference is no simple matter:

> "Japanese grammar seems to embody the Japanese social system in minute detail. For instance, there are four common ways of referring to oneself in Japanese (devices that do roughly what the English pronoun *I* and occasional uses of *we*, *you* and *one* accomplish). To speak at all some choice must be made amongst these four." (M&H p.33)

In English, pronoun choice is pragmatically rather than grammatically determined. M&H suggest that it may be indicative of 'voice': "We must go to this level of analysis, we believe, to account for those occasions on which *you, we, he/she* or *one* are severally used in the first-person singular instead of *I*." (M&H p.37)

Even when the choice of pronoun itself is not a marked one, subtle influences from other persons may be at work. In two languages closely related to English - Dutch and German - the relationships between so-called second and third person pronoun forms are inextricably intertwined.

In German the reflexive pronoun *sich* is used both for the 3rd person singular and plural, and also for the 'polite' 2nd person, both singular and plural:

(3) **sie** hat **sich** geirrt 3rd sing.
'She has made a mistake.'

(4) **sie** haben **sich** geirrt 3rd pl.
'They have made a mistake.'

(5) **Sie** haben **sich** geirrt 2nd sing. and pl., polite
'You (polite, sing.) have made a mistake.'

(6) **Ihr** habt **ihnen/sich** geirrt 2nd pl., informal.
'You (informal, pl.) have made a mistake.'

The polite 2nd person singular takes what looks like a plural inflection in the verb (*haben* in example (5) above), but it is the 3rd person plural not the 2nd (compare the verbs in (4) and (6). The 2nd person pronoun Sie is pronounced identically with the 3rd person feminine singular (3) and 3rd person plural (4): only the written form differs in capitalization (see Table 1.2).

Person	Singular		Plural	
	German	*Dutch*[5]	German	*Dutch*
1	ich	*ik*	wir	*wij*
2, informal	du	*jij*	ihr	*jullie*
2, formal	Sie	*U*/u	Sie, Ihr	*U*/u
3, m	er	*hij*	sie	*zij*
3, f	sie	*zij*		
3, n	es	*het*		

Table 1.2 Personal pronouns in German and Dutch: standard nominative forms.

In Dutch the polite 2nd person form is distinct from all 3rd person forms, but again 3rd person and 2nd person forms overlap in the verb. The available permutations of pronoun and verb generate a hierarchy of formality:

most informal	heb je ...?	hebben jullie...?
▲		
	hebt u ...? (2nd person singular verb)	
▼		
most formal	heeft U ...? (3rd person singular verb)	

1.1.6 Summary

The contribution to the study of pragmatics made by Brown and Gilman's pioneering study cannot be overestimated. Nonetheless, it treated second-person pronoun usage as if this were an autonomous phenomenon, in isolation from both first- and third-person pronoun usage. The use of plurality as a metaphor for power is better treated as a linguistic pattern which extends to pronouns of all persons and also to adjectives and verbs. Once our survey is extended beyond second-person pronouns, moreover, it becomes apparent that choices connected with power, solidarity and other socio-discoursal factors are not restricted to the metaphor of number: the choice between pronoun and noun or nominal group, and the choice of person itself, are equally

significant. Let us now briefly survey some of the most significant linguistic treatments of personal pronouns.

1.2 Linguistic Approaches to Pronouns

1.2.1 Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG)

Chomsky's Standard Theory (Chomsky 1965) did not locate pronouns in Deep Structure, but introduced them transformationally from 'PRO'. However, exponents of TGG invariably took the view that in the case of first and second person pronouns there was nothing to introduce, apart from number marking on the pronoun itself and person/number agreement (3rd person singular vs. the rest) on present-tense verbs. While Lester's exposition of the issue may be more simplistically expressed than some, it is not uncharacteristic of TGG in general in the naïvety of its assumptions:

> "The *I-you* relationship is defined automatically: *I* means the speaker, *you* means the hearer. *We* is the plural form of *I*. ...
>
> "The third person pronouns are completely different from the first and second person pronouns, because the third person pronouns are substitutes for nouns (technically, whole noun phrases), whereas the first and second persons are not substitutes for anything."
>
> (Lester 1971: 46,47)

Transformational grammarians have, of course, pursued a long and obsessive love-affair with reflexives, and this group of pronouns has received far more attention in the literature than any other. The obsession lives on in Government and Binding theory (see, for example, Chomsky 1981; Everaert 1986)[6] which persists in studying pronouns within the sterile confines of syntax (van der Leek 1989). It is easy for M&H to drive a coach and horses through the entire framework: using the example

(7) I should not wait for me

they point out:

> "In spite of the fact that *I* and *me* are clause mates, the reflexivization is blocked for the obvious semantic-pragmatic fact that *I* refers to the second person in this form of address." (M&H p. 56)

An attempt to retrieve the situation by pleading ellipsis (of 'If I were you ...' or the like) only makes matters worse, since in example (8), which is no more or less elliptical than (7), reflexivization *does* take place:

(8) I would not dress myself in such a conspicuous manner

(M&H p. 56, footnote)

The problem for transformational grammarians, as M&H point out, is that "co-reference, an important condition in many perceived rules of pronominalization and reflexivization, is difficult, if not impossible, to define grammatically." (M&H p.56)

To be fair to Government and Binding theory, its greater emphasis on the lexicon does allow for the language user to select nouns or pronouns for insertion into the Deep Structure. However, TGG still has nothing to say about the pragmatic factors which govern this choice. Since it is with these very factors that my study is mainly concerned, a transformational framework will clearly be of no use for the purposes of this dissertation.

1.2.2 Speech Act Theory

For Austin (1962), the distinction between first person pronouns and the rest was significant because it seemed to provide a criterion for identifying 'performative' utterances. However, his search for a reliable diagnostic test - or at least one defined in syntactic terms - proved fruitless when it became apparent that an utterance could qualify as a 'performative' without conforming to the first-person-singular-simple-active-present-tense straitjacket. M&H muddy the waters somewhat by offering a list of examples taken from Katz as "enough to dispose of the idea of syntactical criterion [sic] for performativeness" (p. 40):

(9)
a I request that you close the door
b Close the door!
c The door!
d The damn cat is getting back in.
e The door is open.
f Were you brought up in a barn?

(examples from Katz 1977:23)

While it is true that these sentences "can all be used to perform a speech act with the same illocutionary force" (M&H p.40), it is arguable that only (9)a can properly be described as a 'performative'. If M&H are using the term 'performative' in a sense other than Austin's, they do not explain what it is.

I would offer the following alternative examples of non-canonical performatives, classified as such on the grounds that they amount to 'doing things with words'. This is attested by the fact that they pass the 'hereby test', i.e. one can insert the word 'hereby' after the subject or first auxiliary verb of the main clause without altering the sense:

(10) a We respectfully remind you that this is a no-smoking area.
(first person plural pronoun)

b You are requested not to smoke.
(second person pronoun, passive)

c This space has been reserved for non-smoking customers.
(singular noun, passive, present perfect)

d Customers are requested not to smoke.
(plural noun, passive)

e Since your son Richard has persisted in smoking in the toilets, he is excluded from school for the rest of the term. (third person singular pronoun, passive)

In the course of criticising Katz, M&H assert that "Distinctions such as that between *I* with the present tense and *he/she* with any tense are crucial to the illocutionary force and consequential perlocutionary effects of performative utterances." (p. 46) This is a surprising claim because it looks remarkably like the "syntactical criterion for performativeness" they have just been at pains to dismiss, and it is not difficult to invent counter-examples involving he/she, such as (10)e above. M&H are on firmer ground when they claim that

> "The indexical disambiguation of pronouns is crucial to the theory of performative utterances. It is, via the pronouns, that moral responsibility, commitment, etc. are distributed over the population of persons by the acts accomplished by performative utterances." (M&H p.46)

However, the very fact that 'indexical disambiguation' is necessary makes it clear that the relationship between pronouns and participants in the speech situation is not a transparent one.

1.2.3 Text Analysis

Halliday and Hasan (1976) deal with pronouns, like determiners, under the heading of 'reference', which they distinguish from the purely grammatical concept of 'substitution' (1976:88). Hoey (1991) observes that there are problems with the former term, "in that a pronoun, for example, does not refer to an earlier item but co-refers with the earlier item to something real or imaginary outside the text" (Hoey 1991 p. 71). Hoey begins his treatment of pronouns by reiterating the traditional dichotomy between third person forms and the rest:

> "Of the personal pronoun system, only **he, she, it,** and **they** are treated as items entering into significant repetition sets. **I, you,** and **we** are only so treated if contained within quotation; otherwise they are deemed to refer out of the text into the 'world' (exophoric reference)." (Hoey 1991:71)

However, he quickly adds that 'I', 'you' and 'we' have "an anomalous position within the language of the text. On the one hand, they are clearly closed-class; on the other, they function in context very much in the same way as do such phrases as **the author** or **the reader.**" (ibid.) Hoey goes so far as to refer in one breath to "the so-called first and second person pronouns and their periphrastic equivalents (for example, **the author, the student, the reader**)" (ibid:82). He resolves his dilemma by treating first- and second-person pronouns as lexical, link-forming items on their second and subsequent occurrences.

Hoey's acknowledgement that the 'periphrastic equivalents' "are intelligible by reference not to the co-text but to the situation of utterance and reception" leads him to the radical conclusion that

> "the whole notion of anaphoric reference as a looking back is no more than a convenient fiction; whatever else is happening in reading, it is certainly not the case that we are continually glancing back to check who or what a writer is referring to at any particular moment" (ibid.)

What this means in practice for Hoey's analysis is that first, second and third-person pronouns alike all get 'restored' to their supposed 'full form' in the interests of 'removing unwanted cohesion'. This is necessary for his purposes because sentences which are identified as 'marginal' to the text in terms of lexical 'bonding' are deleted in order to generate a summary. If deleted sentences contain the antecedents for pronouns in sentences left extant in the summary, incomprehensibility is the likely result. Hoey's solution - of expanding pronouns before summarising - leads to glosses such as:

(11) What, then is the advantage which *you, the reader and I*, *the writer,* may hope to derive from a study of the works of the political writers of the past?

- in which the italicised words replace 'we'. Hoey justified his gloss by arguing that the 'we' is inclusive:

> "The pronoun **we** in this instance is understood to be a complicit **we** that includes the reader, not an exclusive **we** referring only to the writer (and the academic community that supports him)". (ibid:175)

Thus Hoey often treats first person pronouns in the same way as third person ones: although only the latter process is labelled 'discoursal expansion', terms like 'referring' are applied to both groups.

Whether or not one accepts Hoey's expansions as legitimate in particular instances (and some of them seem to require a degree of special pleading), the very method of 'restoring' pronouns' 'referents' obliterates the original choices made by the writer. In general it can be said that treatments of pronouns as contributors to textual cohesion, while illuminating some of the complexities of their use, emphasise issues of reference and co-reference at the expense of others. M&H's criticism would seem to hold true:

> "For reasons best known to themselves, practising linguists concentrate on anaphoric and syntagmatic aspects of pronouns to the virtual exclusion of their paradigmatic and deictic functions. They treat pronouns as literally standing in place of nouns, and are apparently uninterested in their role as indexical indicators of persons." (M&H p.13)

1.2.4 Corpus-based approaches

In view of what I contend are serious shortcomings in previous linguistic approaches to pronouns, I would endorse the remarks made by Mühlhäusler and Harré concerning "the superiority of an approach that combines corpus analysis with elicitation to one that relies on elicited data only" (M&H 1990:84). Machine-readable corpora of natural language have been available since the 1970s (see Meijs 1996 for an overview), and have contributed to a shift towards a more empirically-based linguistics which approaches its subject matter in functional rather than formal terms (Meijs 1991). The patterns inevitably revealed in large quantities of corpus data compel the linguist to take account of pragmatic factors.

One example of such an approach is Wales (1996), which draws on the Survey of English Usage (SEU) (which incorporates the LLC used in 1.1.4) and the British component of the International Corpus of English (ICE-GB) (Nelson et al. 2002). Wales' survey of two dozen 20th century grammar books concludes that their rules were "at odds with actual usage" (Wales 1996:xi) and her study of natural language does a great deal to redress the balance. However, her use of corpus data is primarily qualitative rather than quantitative: she extracts the widest possible range of meanings for each pronoun but in a somewhat anecdotal (though hugely entertaining) manner: there is little sense of how *frequent* each of the uses is compared to the others. Moreover, while she devotes some attention to the use and avoidance of pronouns by adults addressing children, she does not utilise any corpus of child language to examine the pronoun usage of children themselves.

1.3 The Aims of This Study

The intention of this study is to examine paradigmatic choices made in real language by real speakers, both children and adults, and accordingly each part of the discussion will draw on examples of usage from a different type of machine-readable corpus. The material analysed in depth will be in both English and Dutch in order to permit comparison of the relevant phenomena between two related Germanic languages.

It is my intention, in what follows, to use a range of corpus data to investigate the ways in which pronoun use in real life deviates from the 'canonical' model of three persons singular and plural.

The remainder of this thesis falls into two sections: the first is an exploration of the 'deviant' pronoun usage of young children, with particular reference to autistic children (Chapter 2) who are reputedly prone to so-called 'pronoun reversals' (Chapter 3). My hypothesis that 'reversals' are not unique to autistic individuals (Chapter 4) is borne out by a detailed examination of both English and Dutch data from normally-developing children aged 1;11 to 2;5 and older children with Down Syndrome (Chapter 5). I also examine the 'deviant' pronoun usage of adults in addressing young children, an area which has generally been neglected despite the large amount of literature devoted to child-directed speech ('motherese') in general. It is found that the language of my autistic subjects is not as dissimilar as might be expected from their Down Syndrome controls and their normally-developing counterparts. It is also found that the speech of the mothers differs for all four groups. The mothers of the Dutch normally-developing children deploy distinct strategies from the English mothers in their modified use of pronouns and proper names. This is different in turn from the language of the autists' mothers, which itself differs from the child-directed speech used to the boys with Down Syndrome.

The second section examines how personal pronouns are manipulated by adults using political discourse in the service of power and solidarity. While the 'power' in question may be aspired to rather than currently wielded, the 'solidarity' may well be feigned rather than sincere. Chapter 6 reviews the academic literature relevant to my chosen data type of Party Election Broadcasts (PEBs); Chapter 7 provides background information on the electoral systems in general, and PEBs in particular, in the UK and the Netherlands; and Chapter 8 describes the methods and findings of my corpus-based study of English and Dutch PEBs during the period 2001-2003. The discourse of politicians and political 'wannabees' in two countries and languages is thus put under the linguistic microscope, revealing that a key component of its notorious slipperiness is attributable to the strategic deployment of pronouns. While my hypothesis concerning the choice between the *T* and *V* forms in Dutch is largely confirmed, the patterns of 'we' versus 'them' usage in both languages turn out to be other than expected. As predicted, 'we' is the most slippery pronoun of all, referring at times to the speaker plus his/her party, at other times to the government, occasionally to a group of

people defined by some social feature or other and very frequently to the country or electorate as a whole. Not only the experienced politicians, but also a host of individuals from a medley of minor parties with no apparent political experience, demonstrate consummate ease in sliding between the different nuances of 'we', both 'inclusive' and 'exclusive'.

The themes of power and solidarity as postulated by Brown and Gilman run through the thesis, and it is argued in the Conclusion (Chapter 9) that rather than viewing these as given attributes of individuals ('plus or minus power/solidarity') linguists should see them as pragmatic commodities which become the objects of verbal struggle. Pronominal forms often provide the location of such struggle as speakers and hearers constantly renegotiate the relationships of themselves and others to the referents of the pronouns being used.

This thesis is probably unusual in that it does not draw its data from a single discourse type, let alone a single source. However, it will restrict itself to spoken language: pronoun usage in written genres such as academic writing have been treated by other researchers, e.g. Tang 2004. Each topic makes use of a different machine-readable corpus. In this introduction I have conducted some initial explorations in the LLC. The raw material for the first section comes from three separate corpora (Manchester, Groningen and Flusberg) in the CHILDES database, while for the analysis of political discourse in the second section I have compiled my own original purpose-built corpora of English and Dutch PEBs. These latter are submitted in electronic form along with the dissertation so that readers may check the findings for themselves and even use the data for their own research[7].

Notes

1. Brown and Gilman use the generic symbols *T* and *V*, from the Latin *tu* and *vos*, to denote the 'familiar' (originally singular) and 'polite' (originally plural) second-person pronouns in any language.

2. My term, not theirs.

3. Male and female Panjabi yuppies, respectively.

4. e.g. 'I don't think we need to worry about that' or 'I mean we all want to be millionaires'.

5. This is a simplified version of the Dutch pronouns: unstressed forms and dialectal variants ('gij' forms etc.) are not shown here.

6. A 'Google' search on the exact phrase 'government and binding' yielded exactly 106,000 results, of which 17,900 also contained the word 'anaphora' and 13,500 contained the word 'reflexive'.

7. Permission is hereby given for the copying and use of the corpora on the enclosed CD-ROM, on the condition that these data are to be used for non-commercial, bona-fide academic research only, and that the researcher must acknowledge this thesis in his/her references, stating it as the source of the corpus data.

SECTION A:

THE ACQUISITION OF PERSONAL PRONOUNS

CHAPTER 2: THE AUTISTIC SPECTRUM

> "Autists often love Disney; exaggerated smiles and tears are useful aids to recognising the emotions that normal children perceive automatically. ... Dumbo was a favourite for years. At first, Sam only liked the credits; then he moved on to the bit when the train goes up the mountain."
>
> Charlotte Moore, "Mind the Gap",
> in The Guardian 31.07.02

2.1 Introduction: Origins of the study of autism

A brief review of the characteristics of autistic children, and the literature concerning them, is appropriate here in order to inform the examination of their language which will follow.

The term 'autism', derived from the Greek word for 'self', appears to have been first used in a clinical context by Bleuler (1908). Bleuler was describing one aspect of the behaviour of adult patients with schizophrenia, namely their avoidance of social interaction. The term in its modern usage - designating a whole syndrome of cognitive and behavioural disorders evident from infancy - was appropriated in the 1940s by Leo Kanner and Hans Asperger, virtually simultaneously and apparently independently of each other (Wing 1991a:98).

2.1.1 Kanner's 'Early Infantile Autism'

The first edition of Kanner's Child Psychiatry (Kanner 1935) mentions neither the term itself nor the symptoms, but by the second edition (Kanner 1948) there are several references to "early infantile autism". The turning point was a study carried out in 1938, which Kanner first reported in 1943 in a paper entitled "Autistic disturbances of affective contact". In his Foreword to a retrospective collection of Kanner's work, Michael Rutter describes the 1943 study as "a landmark in providing the first clear account of a disorder of psychotic intensity which had been present from the beginning without a previous period of normal development." (Kanner 1973a:vii). Rutter is implicitly referring here to Kanner's claim that autism arose from an "inborn defect" and as such was distinct from schizophrenia, which *did* follow a "period of normal development". This view was

unpopular among the psychiatric profession for many years, but is now generally conceded to be correct.

Kanner's patients were eight boys and three girls[1] ranging in ages from 2;4 to 11;1 over the course of the study, which took place from 1938 to 1943 in the USA. From information provided by the parents and from Kanner's own observations, it appeared that the children shared most or all of the following abnormal characteristics:

(1) problems with feeding during the first year of life (refusing both breast and formula milk, constant vomiting);

(2) inability to interact with adults or other children (typified by being happiest when left alone and failing to adjust their body posture when parents went to pick them up);

(3) preference for objects over people, usually involving obsessive and repetitive play (their manual dexterity was usually good for their age);

(4) temper tantrums when obstructed in such play;

(5) fear of mechanical objects making loud noises, such as vacuum cleaners;

(6) insistence on the sameness of surroundings and routine (typified by extreme distress when an item of furniture was moved from its accustomed place);

(7) absence of communicative language but astonishing rote memory for poems, lists, names of objects or animals, titles of pieces of music etc.;

(8) 'echolalia': verbatim repetition of speech they had heard, sometimes immediate but frequently delayed, with weeks or months intervening between the original model and the child's repetition of it;

(9) literal use of language, assuming that the first meaning learnt for a word was its only possible meaning;

(10) failure to apply first- and second-person pronouns correctly.

Kanner saw the children's "powerful desire for aloneness and sameness" as the root of the syndrome, from which all the others flowed:

> "Their world must seem to them to be made up of elements that, once they have been experienced in a certain setting or sequence, cannot be tolerated in any other setting or sequence; nor can the setting or sequence be tolerated without all the original ingredients in the identical spatial or chronologic order. Hence the obsessive repetitiousness. Hence the reproduction of sentences without altering the pronouns to suit the occasion. Hence, perhaps, also the development of a truly phenomenal memory that enables the child to recall and reproduce complex 'nonsense' patterns, no matter how unorganized they are, in exactly the same form as originally construed."
>
> (Kanner [1943]1973a:41).

Kanner was later to summarise the syndrome as follows:

> "They shrink from anything that encroaches on their isolation: persons, noises, moving objects, and often even food."
>
> (Kanner [1949] 1973a:54).

In 1952 Stern reported the first attested case of infantile autism in France, a girl aged 5;6. She is reported as being capable of normal syntax and pronunciation but reluctant to use anything other than single words and gestures, and then only to obtain objects she desired rather than for any communicative purpose (Stern 1952:160). In the same year, van Krevelen published the first account of an autistic child in the Netherlands, a girl who had just turned four. The phenomenon of early infantile autism was becoming an internationally recognised condition.

Although people with Kanner-type autism (henceforth Early Infantile Autism, or EIA) usually display some degree of mental handicap (Wing 1991b, Happé 1994a:16), there are well-documented cases of autistic 'savants' (Rimland 1978) with astounding talents for mathematics, music, or

drawing which are seemingly at variance with their overall IQ scores. One such fictional 'savant', an autistic adult with an incredible head for figures, is convincingly and movingly portrayed by Dustin Hoffman in the 1988 film "Rain Man". A case of even more interest to linguists from real life is Christopher, the polyglot savant documented by Smith and Tsimpli (1995).

2.1.2 Asperger's Syndrome

So far we have assembled a fairly consistent pattern of autistic children being withdrawn and aloof, even silent, the only exception being seen in the occasional 'savant' abilities; but the reality is not so simple. In 1944, one year after Kanner's initial observations, Hans Asperger, who was working in the University Paediatric Clinic in Vienna, published a dissertation entitled "Die 'Autistischen Psychopathen' im Kindesalter" ('Autistic psychopathy' in childhood). Unfortunately this work did not become accessible to Anglophone professionals until well after the war, being finally translated by Frith in 1991. Like Kanner, Asperger viewed autism as a "constitutional" (i.e. innate/inherited) disorder which nonetheless persisted into adulthood, and was distinct from schizophrenia. Many of the behavioural characteristics of his four patients matched those of Kanner's exactly. However, his description of their linguistic skills is markedly different: he reports that they were all fluent speakers who invented their own words, two of them exhibiting remarkable skills as narrators (Frith 1991). Unlike the children in Kanner's study, who were good at rote learning and were often "stuffed" with suitable material by their parents as a result (Kanner [1943]1973a:34), Asperger's subjects appeared to him to be "abstract thinkers" who performed best when using their mental faculties spontaneously. While their linguistic skills were far superior to Kanner's subjects - which might be attributable to their being generally older (aged 6 to 9 years) - their fine motor skills were inferior.

As Happé puts it, "If we decide ... to retain Asperger's insights, we have to decide whether he is describing a different sort of child, or the same sort of child from a different viewpoint or at a different age." (Happé 1994a:13). Wing (1981a) was the first to use the term "Asperger's Syndrome" (henceforth AS) to designate children who had progressed beyond the classic features of EIA to a stage where they had fluent speech and a desire to socialise, although they still experienced problems in expressing either of these faculties. Many experts in the field now

postulate 'Kanner-type' or 'low-functioning' autism (EIA) and 'Asperger's syndrome' or 'high-functioning' autism (AS)[2] at opposite ends of an 'autistic spectrum', allowing individual patients to be placed at various points along it (Wing 1988). A particular individual may progress along this continuum during his or her lifetime: a proportion of previously silent and aloof children make considerable progress around the age of five years, becoming candidates for a diagnosis of AS whereas they had previously fitted the classic autistic profile (Wing 1981a; Wing 1988; Wing 1991a:103,110; C. Gillberg 1991:139; Ozonoff et al. 1991). Attwood (1998:23) comments "We are not sure if this is a natural phenomenon for some children or a tribute to early intervention programmes; probably both". It should be emphasised, however, that the majority of cases of AS do *not* have a prior diagnosis of EIA; and that AS may be identified at an early age, although the mean age for a diagnosis is eight years (Attwood 1998:23): its more subtle symptoms compared with EIA may mean that it goes unnoticed for longer. The incidence of EIA in the UK was put as low as 4.5 per 10,000 junior school age children by Lotter, even when loosely defined (Lotter 1966), but has been variously estimated by others at between 1 and 2 per 1,000 live births (Happé 1994a:25). Asperger's Syndrome is more common, affecting perhaps as many as one in 300 (Attwood 1998:24). In the UK, autism is considerably more prevalent among children of first-generation immigrants from developing countries than among children of native British parents (Wing 1979).

2.1.3 'Theory of Mind'

Happé proposes that the term 'Asperger's syndrome' be reserved for those autistic individuals who can be demonstrated (by means of standard 'false belief' tasks etc.) to possess a 'theory of mind' (ToM), i.e. awareness of mental states such as intention in oneself and others. Although a minority of autistic subjects consistently pass experimental tests for this ability, they do so at a much later chronological and mental age than normal children: Happé's autistic subjects attained a 50% pass rate on her tests at a verbal mental age of about 9.2 years, compared to normally developing children who have the same chance of passing at a verbal mental age of 4 years (Happé 1994a:72-73). Frith argues:

> "Bearing in mind that the tasks are normally passed by the age of four, and that autistic children who can solve false belief tasks do so at a much later age than normal, they may well solve them by a different strategy which is not theory-based."
> (Frith 1991:19).

Happé asserts that this delayed acquisition of metarepresentational and mentalising skills means that the ability "will have missed its 'critical period' and be too late to inform or 'tune up' the various perceptual and cognitive systems that normally develop alongside theory of mind in the young child" (Happé 1994a:98-99). It follows from this that a child initially diagnosed with EIA may subsequently progress to a stage where he/she has acquired a 'theory of mind' and emerge as an AS case in adolescence (Happé 1994a:100).

In Baron-Cohen's tests (1989a), even those autistic children who managed to pass 'first-order' false belief tasks all failed 'second-order' ones (which would require, for instance, understanding that character A in a story wrongly believed that character B wrongly believed something). Bowler (1992) found that 73% of his subjects with AS passed second-order belief tasks; yet such abilities did not seem to equip them to deal with situations in the real world which required this sort of understanding.

Baron-Cohen believes that a theory of mind is fostered by the child's shared attention mechanism (SAM), which in turn, from the age of about 9 months, receives information from the eye-direction detector (EDD) and the intentionality detector (ID). While EDD and ID seem to be intact in autism, SAM is impaired, so that a child can follow eye direction and understand desires, but not synthesise the two kinds of information to interpret eye direction in terms of goals and desires (Baron-Cohen 1989b). SAM in normally developing children "allows joint referencing so that eye gaze is interpreted as an intention to refer (deixis)" (Jordan 1998:40). If Baron-Cohen is right, then, deixis is impaired in autistic children because they are unable to interpret their interlocutor's gaze correctly. The unnatural gaze of children with EIA is well-documented from the earliest literature:

> "Thus the eyes of these little patients stare gazing into space. They rarely or never look anyone in the face, not even if they are spoken to."
>
> (Prick 1954:13, my translation)

> "Their gaze wanders and they do not look the other person in the face."
>
> (Kamp 1954, my translation)

Happé (1994b) and Sparrevohn & Howie (1995) report a correlation between success in theory-of-mind tests and verbal ability. Correlation does not, of course, prove a causal connection between the two, let alone the direction of causality. However, normally developing children do seem to need adequate interaction with others in order to acquire ToM (Siegal & Peterson 1994; Dunn 1988, 1991a, 1991b). Deaf children of hearing parents, who lack opportunities for early interaction, exhibit the same problems with false belief tasks as autistic children (Peterson & Siegel 1995). While Happé believes that ToM is a precursor to language comprehension, Jordan (1998:44) ventures to suggest that there is sufficient evidence for verbal ability being "at least a part determiner of possession of a 'theory of mind'", going so far as to claim:

> "This suggests that not only may language ability itself be a critical factor in determining success on 'theory of mind' tasks, but that the social difficulty experienced by children with autism may exclude such children from the opportunities of learning about mental states and hearing the vocabulary used in a context that would give it meaning; in other words, 'theory of mind' difficulties may be a secondary rather than a primary disability in autism."
>
> (Jordan 1998:32).

2.1.4 Other Theories

'Theory of mind' is not the only current model of the cognitive deficit peculiar to autism: other cognitive theories include evolutionary theory, central coherence theory (discussed in 2.2.5 below) and executive function theory. There are also theories based on developmental models, and what Jordan calls "inter-subjectivity theories" such as that of Peter Hobson (Theory of Impaired Affective-Conative Relatedness: Hobson 1990, 1993). See Jordan 1998 for a critical summary of all these.

2.2 Detecting and Diagnosing Autism

2.2.1 Confounding factors: mental handicap

Many of the symptoms described above can be exhibited by non-autistic people with other disorders. In particular, about three-quarters of all autistic individuals have some degree of mental handicap (DeMyer 1976). There are exceptions: Kanner's subject no. 8, Alfred L., was assessed in a Binet test as having an IQ of 140 (Kanner [1943] 1973a:23). However, Alfred is an extreme case: autistic children's IQ scores cover "the whole range from severe retardation to normal or superior intelligence" (Wing 1991b:119), but a series of studies found that "the majority were below 50 and only around ten to twenty per cent scored IQ 70 or above (ibid.). This complicating factor of mental handicap, doubtless caused by brain damage, makes it difficult to disentangle which symptoms are attributable to the mental handicap and which to the autism *per se*. Any studies attempting to elucidate the issue need to pay careful attention to matching the control group to the I.Q.s of the autistic group (Happé 1994a:16).

One feature of autism which does appear to be characteristic is the extreme discrepancy in performance on the various sub-tasks in IQ tests: non-autistic children are more consistent (Lockyer & Rutter 1969).

> "The most usual pattern [in autistic subjects] was a higher score on tests depending upon simple visuo-spatial skills and rote memory, and a much lower score on language and related tasks. A minority had higher scores on certain language related tests, and were poor on visuo-spatial and motor tasks, but even this group did poorly on abstract comprehension as opposed to verbal production."
>
> (Wing 1991b:121-122)

2.2.2 Wing's Triad

Nonetheless there is strong evidence that a constellation of symptoms does co-occur in most autistic patients, justifying the use of terms such as 'autistic syndrome': Wing & Gould (1978) divided 132 children, all attending special schools in Camberwell, South London, into "sociable" and "socially impaired" on the basis of observations and interviews with carers. They concluded:

> "All the children with social impairments had repetitive stereotyped behaviour and almost all had absence or abnormalities of language and symbolic activities."
> (Wing & Gould 1978:25)

These impairments of *socialisation, communication* and *imagination* - commonly known as 'Wing's triad' - have come to be accepted as the standard basis for the diagnosis of autism (Rutter & Schopler 1987).

2.2.3 Pretend Play

The inclusion of 'imagination' as one of the key deficits in the autistic triad is largely due to the observation that autistic children lack creative play, which was noted from the outset by Kanner and confirmed more recently by Wing and Gould (1979) on the basis of a large epidemiological study. This "deceptively minor feature" (Frith 1991:17) turned out to be "as unique and universal a feature in young autistic children as was communication and socialisation failure" (ibid.). Hand a toy car to a normal child and she will pretend to drive, park or crash it; hand a toy car to an autistic child and he will sit spinning its wheels for hours on end.

> "The activity with objects is monotonous and rhythmical, so that the material, despite the child's attachment to it, does not deserve the name 'toy'".
> (Kamp 1954:57, my translation)

From around the age of 18 months, the normal child:

> "is capable of taking into account that something is the case (a real state of affairs and a first-order representation), and yet can playfully ignore or contradict this knowledge (a 'pretend' state and a second-order representation). An empty cup can be treated as if full, without the child being mistaken about the real state of affairs."
> (Frith & Frith 1991:70).

Autistic children apparently fail to engage in pretend play because they lack the ability to form these 'second-order' representations (Leslie 1987). The later development of a 'theory of mind' (see 2.1.3 above) depends on the ability to manipulate such representations, but one would not expect to see evidence of this (such as performance on false belief tasks) until the child is around four years old.

Powell & Jordan (1993) suggest that autistic children lack an "experiencing self" capable of "personalising pretence", which would mean that "they could engage in solitary symbolic play but

not in shared" (Jordan 1998:37). Autistic children who do not indulge in spontaneous symbolic play may nonetheless be capable of "elicited symbolic play" (Lewis & Boucher 1988; Boucher & Lewis 1990). Significantly, there may be a correlation between the capacity for elicited symbolic play and the first order 'theory of mind' capability discussed above (Baron-Cohen 1987).

2.2.4 Emotional Impairment

Individuals with EIA and AS have difficulty in recognising the emotions of others and in describing their own feelings. Prick (1954:15) states that one of the first symptoms of EIA is the absence of spontaneous laughter; autistic children do, however, express pleasure at physical sensations such as being tickled, with what Grewel (1954b:20) describes as a "distinct vague, non-directed, non-communicative smile"[3]. They seem to have to use cognitive skills to process emotional cues which would be recognised 'instinctively' by non-autistic people. In Sigman et al.'s study (1995), only the autistic subjects exhibited a correlation between success on emotion recognition tasks and IQ scores. Attwood describes a diagnostic test in which he asks children "to label the emotion portrayed in photographs of children or to express in their own face a range of simple emotions such as happy, sad, angry, frightened or surprised." (Attwood 1998:56). He finds that:

> "This activity is very easy for other children, but the child with Asperger's Syndrome has considerable difficulty and tends to rationalise or intellectualise their difficulty. One child replied, 'How can I make a sad face when I feel happy?'"
>
> (Attwood 1998:57)

Jordan argues controversially that this kind of evidence suggests that:

> "far from lacking a 'theory of mind' as a core deficit, children with autism are the only ones who need to approach understanding of minds through the construction of a theory and, given the complexity of such an undertaking, it is not surprising that only the most able succeed in doing so."
>
> (Jordan 1998:59)

For Hobson (1993), the emotional deficit is the primary one in autism. Wing, however, feels that "the argument whether the basis underlying dysfunctions are cognitive or affective in nature is purely semantic" (Wing 1991b:131).

2.2.5 Lack of Central Coherence

At the cognitive level, there is growing evidence that autistic people lack "central coherence" (Frith 1989a), i.e. the use of context in processing information and a Gestalt tendency to see the whole picture at the expense of the parts. Autistic subjects seem lacking in their ability to use context to disambiguate word meanings (Frith & Snowling 1983), while they are gifted at distinguishing hidden figures in a picture or identifying faces presented upside-down (Shah 1988). In other words, they prefer lower levels of meaning. Even subjects who pass 'false belief' tests appear to have weak central coherence (Happé 1994a:124), so this 'can't see the wood for the trees' tendency may prove to be a reliable diagnostic criterion for autism in general, embracing all points on the continuum.[4]

2.3 Possible Causes of Autism

2.3.1 'Psychogenic' factors

Kanner noted in 1943 that many of his patients' parents (a) came from highly-educated, professional backgrounds and (b) showed signs of mental illness or autistic behaviour themselves. He later went so far as to label them "successfully autistic adults, in the sense that they do a creditable job in their chosen occupations" (Kanner [1954] 1973a:74). He came to regard this as "of great significance" (Kanner [1954] 1973a:73), describing the children as being "kept neatly in refrigerators which did not defrost" (Kanner [1949] 1973a:61), and to conclude "Their withdrawal seems to be an act of turning away from such a situation to seek comfort in solitude." (ibid.) He was probably encouraged in such views by the writings of Bettelheim (1956), discussed below[5]. However, he initially resisted drawing causal connections of this kind:

> "The children's aloneness from the beginning of life makes it difficult to attribute the whole picture exclusively to the type of the early parental relations with our patients."
>
> (Kanner [1943]1973a:42)

Kanner never regarded parental influences as the sole or even the main cause of EIA. Throughout his career he continued to deride colleagues who "joined in a chorus chanting the refrain, *cherchez la mère*" (Kanner [1965] 1973a:131), and even wrote a treatise entitled "In defense of mothers"

(Kanner 1941). He had no time for those who used psychogenic factors as a "pseudodiagnostic waste basket into which ... infantile autism was stuffed ... along with everything else" (Kanner [1965] 1973a:131).

It is doubtless true that autism may be exacerbated by distressing circumstances. An extreme case is that of the five-year old subject of Stern (1952): she was the daughter of Polish Jews who had taken refuge in 'la zone sud' of France just before the war, only to have to flee again in 1943:

> "The child was born during her parents' flight. The mother, exhausted by the confinement and by her worries, the necessity of running farther, died shortly after the child's birth. A few weeks later, the father was deported: he did not return. The child was taken in by a cousin of the mother, who was living with false documents and felt safe. ... Her husband ... was living separately from his wife during this period."
>
> (Stern 1952:159, my translation)

It is hardly surprising that the girl's delayed speech was initially seen by a paediatrician as a temporary stage from which she would recover. Stern (1952:161) comments that "it is certain that this phase of the child's life must have exercised a profound influence on her"[6], but nevertheless goes on to blame the adoptive mother for not being capable of "creating around her this atmosphere of affection which every child needs, especially a child who has suffered a great deal in other respects" (Stern 1952:162)[7]. Grewel (1954c:89) also describes this child as "having been exposed to serious deprivation of affection"[8] and in fact disputes Stern's diagnosis of autism as a result, apparently preferring to see it simply as a case of neglect.

Bettelheim's own original observations of "autistic" behaviour were made as a prisoner in the Dachau and Buchenwald concentration camps[9]. Unfortunately he seems to have made the generalisation that all such behaviour was attributable to psychological trauma, and that if the cause of the trauma was not apparent from the immediate circumstances it must be located within the family.

The fact that EIA and AS often run in families and yet can 'skip a generation' indicates "a genetic rather than a psychosocial mode of transmission" (C. Gillberg 1991:130). Nonetheless Bettelheim's

views predominated for decades, only being abandoned relatively recently under pressure from parents of autistic children as well as from some professionals in the field.

A recent, and succinct, dismissal of 'psychodynamic theory' can be found in Jordan (1998):

> "There has never been any evidence to support this theory and the only connection that has ever been established between parent behaviours and autism is either a consequence of having a very disturbed offspring or the result of the genetic link."
>
> (Jordan 1998:24-25, citing Baron-Cohen and Bolton 1993).

2.3.2 Genetic factors

Kanner clearly continued to believe that, while the family environment might be partly to blame, a genetic factor was also involved: as he put it, "whatever predisposition has come from inheritance" (Kanner [1954]1973a:75). Asperger likewise stated,

> "We have been able to discern related incipient traits in parents or relatives, in *every* single case where it was possible for us to make a closer acquaintance."
>
> (Asperger[1944]1991:84)

He suggested that the condition might be hereditary, but added perceptively:

> "However, it is a vain hope to think there may be a clear and simple mode of inheritance. These states are undoubtedly polygenetic, but it is as yet impossible to know whether such a trait is dominant or recessive.
>
> "... It is fascinating to note that the autistic children we have seen are almost exclusively *boys*. ... There is certainly a strong hint at a sex-linked or at least sex-limited mode of inheritance."
>
> (ibid.)

This view is generally accepted today: the occurrence of EIA/AS is higher in children with autistic siblings and in children with other genetic disorders such as Fragile X syndrome (Hagerman 1987), phenylketonuria (Jervis 1963), Rett's Syndrome (Hagberg et al. 1983) and tuberous sclerosis (Hunt & Dennis 1987). EIA, AS and Asperger Traits (the later being defined as fulfilling some but not all of the usual clinical criteria for AS) often appear in the same family: C. Gillberg (1991) describes two case studies of families containing all three types of impairment. The gender imbalance in the

epidemiological distribution of EIA and AS suggests that the sex chromosomes 'X' and 'Y' are likely to be involved somehow.

2.3.3 Opiates

Another recent theory is that the body's endogenous opiate system, which serves several functions including pain relief, is abnormal in autistic individuals, due to inadequate absorption of dietary peptides (Panksepp 1979; Reichelt et al. 1981; Sahley & Panksepp 1987; Gillberg 1988; Shattock et al. 1991). As we shall see (2.3.4), Wakefield et al. (1998) link this to the intestinal disorders which were prevalent in their autistic patients. This opiate imbalance may explain why some autistic people engage in self-harming behaviour (Sandman 1988) or appear to be under-sensitive to pain or over-sensitive to touch (compare the discussion of over-sensitivity to sound, 2.3.5).

2.3.4 Vaccines

In recent years there has been much concern in the British media that the combined MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) vaccine may be responsible for some cases of EIA. A typical parental account of such a case is given by David Thrower:

> "I watched my son descend from a perfectly normal 14-month old to a mentally handicapped 16-month old. At 14 months he could post square bricks through square slots. Today at 13 years, he still cannot. Did I miss some other major but mysterious adverse event in his development? And why was such an adverse event at exactly the time of his vaccination?"
>
> (quoted in Private Eye, 26/01/01 - 08/02/01)

Wakefield et al. (1998:637) studied 12 children with gastrointestinal symptoms "who, after a period of apparent normality, lost acquired skills, including communication". Nine of the children were diagnosed as autistic: their behaviour had started to deteriorate within weeks (and in some cases days) of receiving the MMR vaccination. In seven of these cases, either the parents or the family doctor had suggested a link with the vaccine: Wakefield et al. agreed that the correlation of "intestinal and behavioural pathologies" they found was unlikely to have occurred by chance, citing other studies which had identified a link between autism and intestinal disease, and apparently favouring the 'opioid excess' theory that autistic disorders result from the incomplete breakdown of

peptides from certain grains and dairy products, with resulting opioid effects on the central nervous system (see 2.3.3 above). Wakefield et al. provoked a storm of protest, both in The Lancet where their paper had been published, and in the general media, with public health practitioners accusing both them and The Lancet's editors of acting irresponsibly and provoking a "public health disaster" (O'Brien et al. 1998) which would "increase the anguish of the parents of the sick children" (Beale 1998). Wakefield is now generally considered to have been discredited by more recent and more extensive studies, but the episode has left some uncomfortable questions unanswered. It is intriguing to note here Kanner's account of one of his original eleven patients (case 3, Richard M.), who was first examined at the age of 3;3:

> "Pregnancy and birth were normal. ... Nutrition and physical growth proceeded satisfactorily. Following smallpox vaccination at 12 months, he had an attack of diarrhea and fever, from which he recovered in somewhat less than a week.
>
> "In September, 1940, the mother, in commenting on Richard's failure to talk, remarked in her notes:
>
> > 'I can't be sure just when he stopped the imitation of word sounds. It seems that he has gone backward mentally gradually for the last two years.'"
>
> (Kanner [1943]1973a:12)

Although Kanner himself did not consider the possibility, it could be significant that Richard M. is the only one of his original patients who was not autistic from birth. On the contrary, his autism emerged shortly after the vaccine and concomitant gastric infection. Current campaigners against the MMR vaccine such as David Thrower (quoted above) might well regard this as evidence in support of their case that vaccines can cause brain damage in young children.

2.3.5 Hearing disorders

Autistic children are often initially thought to be deaf, due to their failure to respond to speech (Kanner 1948:717, Prick 1954:14). Evidence is now emerging that there really may be something wrong with their hearing, but in the opposite way to what one might expect: people with EIA and AS are *over-sensitive* to mechanical and some natural sounds. An autist named Darren retrospectively describes his own perceptions as follows:

> "I was also frightened of the vacuum cleaner, the food mixer and the liquidiser because they sounded about five times as loud as they actually were."
> (White and White 1987:224)

Perhaps the most extreme example is the boy who disliked playing in the garden because he could not stand the noise of the butterflies' wings (Attwood 1998:132).

This over-sensitive hearing may account for the many references in the literature to autistic children's fear of machines, and their attempts to run away from places like school playgrounds: they may not simply be shunning the company of other children *per se*, but trying to escape the noise the children make, which they perceive as unbearable. In an attempt to screen out the noise, they may block out *all* ambient sound by immersing themselves totally in solitary play, and thus not respond even to voices at normal volume. Their monitoring of their own speech may be equally distorted, leading them to speak in a whisper or at an unusual pitch - features which are frequently observed in children with EIA (see, e.g., Attwood 1993:11).

2.3.6 Epilepsy

Kanner noted (1973b:185) that two of his original eleven 1943 patients developed repeated epileptic seizures: one began at the age of 5 years, the other in her twenties. It is by now well-established that about one in six pre-school autistic children has epilepsy, with a similar proportion suffering their first seizure during adolescence (C. Gillberg 1990). Since the majority of autistic individuals are not epileptic, the epilepsy cannot be a general cause of autism; but perhaps both disabilities are attributable to damage to a particular area of the brain.

2.3.7 Other possible factors

In a few cases autism has appeared in previously healthy adolescents or adults as a result of infection with the *herpes simplex encephalitis* virus (C. Gillberg 1986; I.C. Gillberg 1991), and other kinds of virus have also fallen under suspicion. Asperger ([1944] 1991:84) stated confidently that he knew of cases of both boys and girls in which "a preceding encephalitis had caused the state".

Tantam believes that AS "results from a failure of congenital gaze reflexes, which ensure that the normal infant attends to social signals preferentially and locks the normal infant into the ebb and flow of social interaction" (Tantam 1991:180). It is not clear whether Tantam views this gaze deficit, which he sees as resulting from neurological abnormalities, as equally fundamental in children with Kanner-type autism.

Individuals with EIA and AS have an increased risk of developing Tourette Syndrome (Attwood 1998:108-9) and of exhibiting features of catatonia and Parkinson's disease (Attwood 1998:109-110). The reasons for these links with other disorders is not yet clear.

One study (Gillberg 1989) has indicated a high incidence of toxaemia during pregnancies leading to births of children with AS. This might also explain the frequent problems surrounding pregnancy and birth which are reported by mothers of autistic children (DeMyer 1979; Wing 1981a), although such problems could also be due to genetic abnormalities in the foetus which are not identifiable by any tests developed so far. C. Gillberg (1991:127) reports on a single family in which the two cases of EIA "were both associated with brain-damaging factors (maternal rubella and perinatal asphyxia)", while no such factors were present in the one case of AS. The implication here is that "there is a genetic basis for Asperger syndrome and that in cases with autism, brain damage has been added" (C. Gillberg 1991:141; cf. van Krevelen 1971). Tantam (1991:179) suggests that this brain damage affects "speech areas or motor cortex, or both", explaining the increased likelihood of both mental handicap and language impairment in EIA as opposed to AS.

Recently Michel Odent, the pioneer of natural childbirth, has advanced a theory which may well prove to be as controversial as Wakefield's claims about the MMR vaccine. He alleges that "industrialised obstetrics" - the increasing medicalisation of childbirth involving interventions such as forceps and caesarian deliveries, combined with labour-inducing and pain-killing drugs - is responsible for a variety of ailments in the resulting children. He names "the dramatic rise in autism" as one of the modern ills which may be attributable to such practices (see Moorhead in The Guardian, 2002).

2.3.8 Autism and Handedness

A further intriguing possibility is suggested by Kanner's repeated observation that his young patients remained effectively ambidextrous until a late age: for instance, Brad, aged 8 years, "used both hands indiscriminately, guided mostly by the proximity of the object to either hand." (Kanner 1973d:231). Handedness may be partly influenced by genetic factors (Perelle & Ehrman 1994): left-handedness is more common in males than in females, giving rise to theories of X-linked transmission (McManus 1991; McKeever 2000), and to the "right-shift theory" which argues that a chance distribution of asymmetry has been displaced further to the right in females (Annett, 1999). However, monozygotic twins are often differently handed, and to the same extent as dizygotic twins and other siblings, so handedness cannot be entirely genetically determined (Laland et al. 1995; Bishop 2001; James and Orlebeke 2002). Reiss & Reiss (1999) argue for "a polygenetic explanation which takes environmental influences into consideration"[10]. Handedness has long been associated with cerebral language dominance (Knecht et al. 2000); McManus (1991) even claims that "Finding the gene for handedness and hence for language dominance would unlock the neurobiology of language". It is, however, probably overly optimistic to expect to find a "gene for handedness" at all, let alone a single gene determining both these traits.

Other factors which have been mooted include pre-, peri- and post-natal influences, such as season of birth (Martin & Jones 1999); birth weight in singletons and birth order in twins (James and Orlebeke 2002); intrauterine endocrine variables (Geschwind & Galaburda 1985, Holtzen 1994, Pavia et al. 1994); intrauterine exposure to diethylstilbestrol (Schachter 1994); ultrasound screening in pregnancy (Kieler et al. 1998); human leukocyte antigens B8 and DR3 (Gangestad et al. 1996); and pregnancy and birth complications (Sperling et al. 1999). McKeever et al. (2000) found a correlation between left-handed parents and reduced family size.

Non-right-handedness, and "mixed-handedness" in particular, is known to be higher than normal in schizophrenic patients, who seem to have undergone an anomalous lateralisation process (Sperling et al. 1999). Shifts in handedness seem to correlate with particular symptoms in schizophrenia, such as impaired sociability (Orr et al. 1999). Orr et al. found an increased proportion of mixed-handedness in the first-degree relatives of their patients as well as in the

patients themselves, and so suggest a genetic basis for the phenomenon. Other studies, however, find no such family pattern and propose a neurodevelopmental rather than a genetic origin for both the deviant handedness and the psychosis itself in mixed-handed patients (Cannon et al. 1995[11]; Satz & Green 1999).

The combination of genetic and developmental factors which is now commonly proposed as determining handedness bears remarkable similarities to the combination commonly postulated as determining autism (see 2.3.7 above). It is therefore surprising that a search of the ISI Web of Science® database failed to turn up a single study of handedness and autism, especially in view of the fact that considerable research *has* been done on possible correlations between handedness and schizophrenia (e.g. Sperling et al. 1999). This lacuna may soon be filled, however: of especial interest is a recent study by Morris et al. (2001) which establishes "a link between inflammatory bowel disease and left-handedness which may be genetic and/or environmental in origin". One of the authors of this paper is Andrew Wakefield, who as we have seen (2.3.4) believes that autism may be triggered by bowel disease, which may in turn be triggered by the MMR vaccine. Kanner's original observations on his young patients' digestive disorders have turned out to be surprisingly relevant (at least if one is persuaded by Wakefield et al.); perhaps his observations regarding deviant handedness will prove to be equally pertinent. While research of this nature is beyond the scope of this thesis or its author's expertise, I would venture to suggest that handedness is a promising area for further research which could benefit autistic children.

2.4 Autism and Schizophrenia

Asperger ([1944]1991:86) noted "a number of similarities between autistic psychopathy and schizophrenic states". However, after carefully considering his patients' behaviours he decided that they were symptoms neither of schizophrenia nor of a state precursory to it.

Kanner's writings do give occasional hints that some of his patients had become autistic after an initial period of normal development: see, e.g., his 1943 account of Richard M., quoted in 2.3.4 above, and the reference to children who "having said a few words[,] abandoned articulate language

altogether" ([Kanner & Eisenberg 1955] Kanner 1973a:82). Nonetheless he consistently maintained that the autistic condition existed from birth, unlike schizophrenia:

> "... withdrawal implies a removal of oneself from previous participation. These children have never participated. They have begun their existence without the universal signs of infantile response."
>
> (Kanner [1965]1973a:124)

On this point Kanner is in complete agreement with Asperger:

> "While the schizophrenic patient seems to show progressive loss of contact, the children we are discussing lack contact from the start."
>
> (Asperger[1944]1991:39)

Kanner & Eisenberg conceded in 1956 that they had by then encountered "a number of children who reportedly developed normally through the first 18 to 20 months of life, only to undergo at this point a severe withdrawal of affect, manifested by the loss of language function, failure to progress socially, and the gradual giving up of interest in normal activities." ([Kanner & Eisenberg 1956] Kanner 1973a:93). Although these "could not be differentiated from the children with the more classical account of detachment apparently present in the neonatal period" (ibid.), they maintained that "even these cases are much earlier in onset and phenomenologically distinct from cases of childhood schizophrenia" (ibid.). By "phenomenologically distinct" they probably meant that autistic children did not appear to 'hear voices' or suffer paranoid delusions. Kanner & Eisenberg observed from follow-up studies of 42 autistic individuals that "at no time did they give evidence of delusions or definitely ascertainable hallucinations." ([Kanner & Eisenberg 1955] Kanner 1973a:88).

Kanner was also aware that the incidence of "clinical psychiatric disorders" among immediate relatives of autistic children (i.e. not counting the milder neuroses of the "refrigerator parents") was low, in contrast with the high levels in families of childhood schizophrenics (Kanner 1948:723; [Kanner and Eisenberg 1956] Kanner 1973a:96).

Despite these clear convictions, and the views of at least some of his international contemporaries that autism should be kept apart from schizophrenia (e.g van Krevelen 1952, Stern and Schachter

1953, Grewel 1954a:7, Prick 1954:16[12], Rimland 1964), Kanner appears to have retracted his earlier views and conceded that EIA might "be looked upon as the earliest possible manifestation of childhood schizophrenia" and that no distinction between the two was likely to emerge in the future (Kanner [1949] 1973a:55). The 2nd, 3rd and 4th editions of Child Psychiatry (Kanner 1948, 1957, 1972) all treated the topic of EIA within the chapter on childhood schizophrenia, while at times making a distinction between the conditions. By 1965, when he wrote a paper specifically addressing the issue entitled "Infantile autism and the schizophrenias", Kanner was still vacillating, arguing that autism itself first had to be acknowledged by the psychiatric community as a separate disease, after which its relation to the group of schizophrenias (which in any case was far from homogeneous) could be assessed. His final view on the matter seems to have been "it matters little whether autism be regarded as a form of schizophrenia or looked upon as a disease *sui generis*." (Kanner [1968] 1973a:139.)

It is now well established that the two disorders *are* distinct. Recent studies indicate that the level of schizophrenia among adults with AS is no more than 5 per cent (Tantam 1991; Wolff 1995). Only one of Asperger's 200 patients went on to develop schizophrenia. The author of this thesis has personal knowledge of an adult male who was initially suspected of being autistic as a child, was diagnosed as schizophrenic in his teenage years and now, in his late thirties and on anti-psychotic medication (clozapine), displays virtually all the classic symptoms of Asperger's Syndrome. He would appear to be a rare case, however.

With the benefit of hindsight we may be disappointed in Kanner for perpetuating the confusion on this issue rather than using his insights and clinical evidence to better effect. However, the relationship between autism and mental illness actually appears to be rather complex.

Frith and Frith (1991) argue that if something is deficient in the cognitive processes underlying (a) communication and (b) action, either "false positives" or "false negatives" can result, giving rise to very different kinds of symptoms. For instance, in the case of communication, a "false negative" in the ability to distinguish between one's own mental state and the state of the world would leave an individual "unable to represent [his/her] own mental states (flattening of affect)", while a "false positive" would give rise to "delusions of control" and "auditory hallucinations" (Frith & Frith

1991:78). The processes alluded to here are all concerned with 'second-order representation', a crucial precursor to 'theory of mind'. The central point of their argument is:

> "In practice, however, we see only false negatives in the case of autism, and only false positives in the case of acute phases of schizophrenia. Only some schizophrenic patients experience both positive and negative symptoms, while many chronic patients experience only negative symptoms.
>
> "... Only if second-order representations are available and used can false positives occur. If second-order representations are not available at all, then false negatives are bound to occur, and only those. This would be the case in severe cases of autism, and might be the case in certain severe and late stages of schizophrenia where all vestiges of the formerly acquired second-order representation systems have disappeared."
>
> (Frith & Frith 1991:79)

Thus the two conditions, while distinct, may be due to the malfunctioning of the same cognitive processes. Happé develops Frith & Frith's reasoning further in suggesting a possible explanation as to why AS subjects have a higher incidence of psychiatric disorders:

> "Asperger's syndrome people, who gain theory of mind late and therefore abnormally, may be at high risk for having their theory of mind 'go wrong'. On this hypothesis it would be impossible for a Kanner-type autistic person (who has no theory of mind) to show these psychotic or positive symptoms. In this sense (according to Frith & Frith's theory) Asperger's syndrome would be something of a midpoint between autism and (positive or florid) schizophrenia; while the former is due to a lack of theory of mind, and the latter due to over-active theory of mind, some people with Asperger's syndrome may show both the scars of early lack and the florid symptoms of late acquired theory of mind working abnormally hard."
>
> (Happé 1994a:99)

2.5 Summary

Identifying the cause of autism is not among the objectives of this thesis; it is, in any case, rapidly becoming clear that there are *multiple* causes. It does seem to be the case that all forms of autism involve some kind of brain damage[13], albeit caused by a range of agencies and at different ages for different individuals, and notwithstanding the fact that medical researchers have so far failed to locate the precise area(s) of the brain involved. Suspect regions are the cerebellum and the frontal lobes: see Happé 1994a:30-32 and Attwood 1998:143 for a review of the medical literature on this point.

It is now generally accepted that autism is not always present from birth but may arise in a previously healthy individual as a result of some kind of infectious agent or injury[14]. In this respect Kanner was wrong. Wing (1989) suggests that there may be two kinds of autism, with early and late onset. As Attwood (1998:143) puts it, "We recognise three potential causes of autism, namely genetic factors, unfavourable obstetric events and infections during pregnancy or early infancy that affect the brain."

Notes

1. It is interesting to note that the gender ratio of Kanner's patients accurately reflected the proportion of boys to girls suffering from autism, which has more recently been established as between 2:1 and 3:1. By the time Kanner had collected case histories of 100 patients the ratio was 4:1 (Kanner [1954] 1973a:71). See Wing (1981b).

2. While the term 'Asperger's Syndrome' is gaining currency in the UK, the label 'High Functioning Autism' is generally preferred in the USA. Attwood (1998:150-151) comments rather cynically that it may be easier to obtain funding and support from some agencies if the term 'autism' is used in the diagnosis.

3. My translation.

4. However, it has been argued by some (Baltaxe & Simmons 1977, Prizant 1983) that echolalia is evidence of a 'gestalt' processing tendency on the part of autistic children, which would appear to imply that they have an *excess* of central coherence!

5. Happé (1994a:27) claims that Bettelheim was the source of the 'refrigerator mother' theory and that "this idea was later taken up by Kanner". I believe she is wrong, in view of the fact that Kanner used the 'refrigerator' metaphor in his own writings as early as 1949, whereas Bettelheim does not appear to have published anything containing this image before 1956.

6. My translation.

7. My translation.

8. My translation.

9. Bettelheim's biographer Richard Pollak (whose brother had died under Bettelheim's care at the Orthogenic School in 1948) paints an unsympathetic picture of him (Pollak 1997). The irony of this Holocaust survivor reproducing the behaviour of his former captors was apparently not lost on his victims:

   "Pollak portrays his subject as a complex and often tyrannical man who abused his young charges as well as his staff, some of whom criticized his 'Nazi-Socratic method' and called him 'Brutalheim.' Bettelheim, in fact, nicknamed himself the Big Bad Wolf, pointing out that, as a foster parent and authority figure, he was expected to play that role. While Bettelheim saw the school as a refuge from a dangerous world, not a few of its residents likened it to a concentration camp, and Bettelheim to a capricious commandant" (Kidd, 2005:89).

10. This article is in German: the quotation is from the English abstract provided by the authors.

11. Cannon is also one of the authors of Orr et al. 1999, and so appears to have participated in two studies yielding contradictory findings! However, Orr et al. looked (successfully) for mixed-handedness in the relatives of their patients, whereas Cannon et al. looked (unsuccessfully) for psychotic illness, so perhaps the results are less contradictory than they at first appear.

12. Prick (1954:16) cites Meyknecht (1944-1945) as describing one group of children with autistic symptoms as "pseudoschizophrenic", which muddies the waters nicely.

13. Cf. Asperger's description of one of his patients:

> "In Hellmuth's case there were clear indications that his autism was due to brain injury at birth. His medical history - asphyxia, fits, endocrine disorder, hyper-salivation, neurologically based apraxia - clearly pointed to an organic cause."
> (Asperger [1944]1991:67).

14. As an example of autism induced by physical injury, see Wing's "case of the late talker", whose problems apparently began "from the age of six months when his head was accidentally bruised" (Wing 1991a:103).

CHAPTER 3: PRONOUN USAGE WITHIN THE AUTISTIC SPECTRUM

"Life was once a tangled line.
Like saying yours, and meaning mine.
Like feeling sick, but saying fine.
Like ordering milk, and getting wine.
Like seeing a tree, and saying vine.
But I'm slowly straightening it out."

(from "Ironing Out the Wrinkles"
by Vanessa Regal[1], a teenager with Asperger's Syndrome:
in Attwood 1998:153.

3.1 Pronoun usage by individuals with Early Infantile Autism

The American Psychiatric Association lists 16 "Diagnostic criteria for autistic disorder", one of which is the following[2]:

> "marked abnormalities in the form or content of speech, including stereotyped and repetitive use of speech (e.g. immediate echolalia or mechanical repetition of television commercial); use of 'you' when 'I' is meant (e.g. using 'You want cookie?' to mean 'I want a cookie'); idiosyncratic use of words or phrases ... or frequent irrelevant remarks ..."
>
> (American Psychiatric Association 1987).

Attwood gives a more detailed account of the 'communication' segment of Wing's triad, which includes a whole range of linguistic peculiarities:

> "They have several unusual characteristics such as a repetitive and idiosyncratic use of language, saying 'You' or their own name when 'I' is appropriate, and have semantic/conceptual difficulties. This unusual language profile is also characterised by abnormalities of prosody (e.g. pitch, stress, rate, rhythm and intonation of speech) where their speech is pedantic, lacks inflection, or has an unusual accent and abnormality of pragmatics (e.g. turn taking, interruption of speaker, faulty use of gaze, and maintenance of conversation by questions.)"
>
> (Attwood 1993:11)

The focus of this thesis is on the pronouns, but it is important to keep the wider picture in mind. Intonation may provide valuable clues as to what is going on in the child's head, and the (non-) acquisition of skills in turn-taking may explain many of the other abnormalities.

3.1.1 Kanner's description of autistic pronoun usage

Kanner set the tone for later discussions of autistic pronoun use when he referred to:

> "the typical, almost pathognomonic, pronominal reversals which consist of the child's reference to himself as 'you' and to the person spoken to as 'I'."
>
> Kanner ([1946] 1973a:46)

Three of Kanner's original subjects were still almost entirely mute at the end of his encounters with them, but he asserted that there was "no fundamental difference" between them and the eight speaking children[3] "as far as the communicative functions of speech are concerned." It is striking that every single one of the speaking children is documented as misusing, or having gone through a stage of misusing, first- and second-person pronouns. Additionally one of the mute children (Herbert B., 3;2) had an older sister who, according to their mother, "had difficulties with her pronouns and would repeat 'you' and 'I' instead of using them for the proper persons." (Kanner [1943] 1973a:20).

The following accounts of two of Kanner's subjects serve to illustrate the phenomenon:

Case 1: Donald T., aged 5;1 when first seen by Kanner.

> "He always seemed to be parroting what he had heard said to him at one time or another. He used the personal pronouns for the persons he was quoting, even imitating the intonation. When he wanted his mother to pull his shoe off, he said: 'Pull off your shoe.' When he wanted a bath, he said: 'do you want a bath?'"
>
> (Kanner [1943] 1973a:4)

Kanner continued to receive reports on Donald's development from his mother. Apparently he made some linguistic progress, albeit painfully slow:

> "Though he occasionally began to speak of himself as 'I' and of the person addressed as 'you', he continued for quite some time the pattern of pronominal reversals. When, for instance, in February, 1939, [i.e. age 5;5] he stumbled and nearly fell, he said of himself, '*You* did not fall down.'"
>
> (Kanner [1943] 1973a:5)

Kanner reports that by the time Donald came for a check-up in April 1941 (i.e. at 7;7), "He used pronouns adequately and his sentences were grammatically correct." (Kanner [1943] 1973a:7)

Case 9: Charles N., aged 4;6 when first seen by Kanner.

His mother reported:

> "He went through a period of quoting another person; never offers anything himself. His entire conversation is a replica of whatever has been said to him. He used to speak of himself in the second person, now he uses the third person at times; he would say, 'He wants' - never 'I want.'
>
> "... He is destructive ... He will break a purple crayon into two parts and say, '*You* had a beautiful purple crayon and now it's two pieces. Look what *you* did.' ... He is proud of wetting, jumps up and down with ecstasy, says, 'Look at the big puddle *he* made.'"
>
> (Kanner [1943]1973a:25)

While Charles' mother reported examples of both 2nd and 3rd person substitutions for 'I', Kanner reports only 2nd person examples: "Give it to you!" and "I'll give it to you!", both meaning "You give it to me" (Kanner [1943] 1973a:27).

A later patient of Kanner's, Bernard S. aged 2;10, apparently *only* used 3rd person substitutions:

> "The child showed some bizarre behaviour and echolalia. He referred to himself in the third person and often had a smile on his face which was unrelated to anything obvious to the onlooker."
>
> (Kanner 1973c:204)

Kanner's study was a diachronic one: from studying his patients over several years he drew the conclusion that:

> "Between the ages of 5 and 6 years, they gradually abandon the echolalia and learn spontaneously to use personal pronouns with adequate reference. Language becomes more communicative, at first in the sense of a question-and-answer exercise, and then in the sense of greater spontaneity of sentence formation."
>
> (Kanner [1943] 1973a:42)

3.1.2 Early Dutch accounts: Van Krevelen, Prick

Van Krevelen's four-year-old patient exhibited the typical cluster of abnormalities described by Kanner, including the linguistic features, this time in Dutch:

> "She always speaks about herself in the third person, and indicates herself by means of her first name, by which she hears herself addressed."
>
> (van Krevelen 1952:203, my translation)

Van Krevelen does, in fact, give an example of her referring to herself in the *second* person: "Did you fall down in the street?" (ibid.), described as a literal repetition (out of context) of an utterance from six weeks earlier. Although van Krevelen does not say so explicitly, the interrogative syntax suggests that it is a verbatim repetition of something that had been said to her on a previous occasion[4]. This spoken echolalia was the more prosaic counterpart to the girl's use of snatches of children's songs in situations where the lyrics apparently struck her as appropriate: for instance, singing a carol for the Christ-child to her new baby sister, born in April. No wonder van Krevelen, following Tramer (1945), dubs the phenomenon "phonographismus".

Van Krevelen's observation that "She responds to questions with repetitions of the question, with the same intonation" (ibid.) confirms the picture of echolalia. Sometimes she repeated both question and answer in a single utterance. He also tells us that she directed long speeches at her doll: unfortunately no details of these monologues are available, so it is not known whether these, too, were verbatim repetitions of previously heard speech or whether they contained any original use of language.

Grewel (1954b) and Kamp (1954) refer to children with EIA speaking about themselves "in the 2nd or 3rd person". Prick's contribution to the same conference, held in the Netherlands in 1953 (Grewel et al. 1954), contains a rather confusing reference to pronoun usage by autistic children:

> "They avail themselves of a cliché-talk in which they reproduce what they heard at some time. They do not speak about themselves with 'I' but with 'you', while the third person is designated with 'I'. The sentences are often defective: sometimes they are not completed."
>
> (Prick 1954:14, my translation.)

The description of children with EIA referring to themselves as 'you' ('jij') is by now familiar, but Prick states that they use 'I' ('ik') instead to indicate, not the interlocutor (second person) but the *third* person. This is surprising; unfortunately Prick does not give any actual examples and does not elaborate further.

Grewel (1954b:20) refers to autistic children speaking about themselves in the 2nd or 3rd person, again without giving any examples.

3.1.3 More recent accounts

Volkmar et al. (1986) interviewed parents of autistic children and state that 66% of their respondents reported pronoun confusion of some kind. Silberg (1978) found that autistic children with a Mean Length of Utterance (MLU) greater than 3.0 made few errors with their pronouns. This can be compared with the findings of Bloom et al. (1975), who set the threshold for normal children at MLU 2.5.

Attwood (1993:11) mentions that autistic children may also use their own name in place of 'I', though it is not clear what evidence he has for this.

3.1.4 Jordan

Jordan's doctoral dissertation (Jordan 1998) is the most thorough investigation available to date of autistic children's pronoun usage, and as such deserves an extended discussion here.

3.1.4.1 Experiment 1: 1st and 2nd person pronouns

Jordan (1998) conducted both experimental and observational studies of pronoun usage by children with EIA. In her first experiment she tested 11 children in a one-to-one setting, where the only possible referents of the pronouns were the experimenter (herself) or the child. The control groups consisted of (a) normally developing children and (b) children with learning difficulties (henceforth LD), matched for "receptive-vocabulary-age" in each case (Jordan 1998:106-7).

In the comprehension test, where children had to carry out actions with toys, the autistic children performed no worse than the normal controls on their interpretation of 'you' (two children made one error each out of a possible 10 in each group; the LD children made no errors). However, while neither the normal nor the LD group made any errors at all with understanding the referent of 'me', two autistic children made 6 errors each and one made 9. In other words, the autistic children tended to apply the actions to themselves rather than to the experimenter.

The autistic children fared much worse on the production test; "9 of the 11 children with autism made the maximum number of 10 errors in the production of both pronouns" (Jordan 1998:110), compared with one LD and three normal children making any errors. However, the errors made by the EIA children were not typically 'reversals'; rather, they consisted mostly of using the experimenter's name in place of 'you' and their own name or 'I' in place of 'me'. In other words, they had usually identified the *referent* correctly but were apparently confused about the appropriate label.

Jordan explains her findings by arguing that in comprehension tasks children could treat the pronouns as "referential labels", whereas in production they had to resolve the "speaker principle" (Jordan 1998:115; see section 3.3.4 below). She apparently means here that since most of her EIA subjects were treating 'me' and 'you' as fixed labels to refer to the experimenter and themselves respectively (i.e. they had 'fixed' the meaning of the terms in hearer rather than speaker role), they were unable to use them with the referents reversed. She does concede that since she was unfamiliar with her subjects they must have had *some* awareness that 'I' and 'me' were attached to the speaker role rather than simply to a specific individual; otherwise they would only have been capable of attaching these items to their more familiar interlocutors and not to the experimenter (Jordan 1998:139).

Unfortunately for Jordan, this fails to explain why 3 children in her EIA group *did* make a high number of errors with 'me' in the comprehension test. Nor does it account for why in the production test, out of the 9 autistic subjects who avoided 'me' entirely, 6 sometimes replaced it with 'I' rather than with their own name. Surely if the child had 'fixed' the meaning of each pronoun as a "referential label" in hearer mode, he/she would have fixed 'I' in exactly the same way as 'me', i.e.

as always referring to the interlocutor. Possible explanations for the anomaly are (a) that a child could fix 'me' in hearer mode as referring to the 'other' but 'I' in speaker mode as referring to 'self'; or (b) unlike 'me', 'I' does *not* have fixed reference but is used as part of unanalysed 'chunks', in echolalic manner. Option (a) seems an unlikely theory and I have not seen it postulated anywhere in the literature. It would have been possible to test this by including 'I' in the comprehension part of the experiment to see whether the children understood it as well as they did the other two forms: if they had fixed it in speaker mode they would misinterpret its reference when in hearer mode. Unfortunately Jordan did not include such a test. Jordan seems to offer support for hypothesis (b) when, in an earlier chapter, she says:

> "Normally developing children use 'me' before 'I'. 'I' appears initially in imitated or 'formula' phrases such as *'I can do it!'* or *'I want it!'*."
>
> (Jordan 1998:96, citing Fay 1980, Clark 1978 and Moerk 1977).

This may well justify Jordan's choice of 'me' rather than 'I' in her selection of target pronouns for her own experiments; however, the whole point of conducting such experiments is presumably to elicit utterances which are *not* echolalic, so it is hard to see how the subjects' productive use of 'I' can be explained in this way.

Moreover, one aspect of Jordan's methodology here is questionable. The main technique used to test productive use of pronouns was "closure", "whereby the experimenter begins the statement and leaves it unfinished with heavy rising intonation, so that the child can complete it" (Jordan 1998:107). Even allowing Jordan's claim that the children had been given sufficient practice at this activity to overcome the typical autistic difficulties with interpreting intonation, there remains a more serious problem. Jordan prompted each child with utterances like "Look! The spider's landed on ---?", stating "Answers that took the child's (the final speaker's) perspective, were counted as correct" (Jordan 1998:109), in other words the child was expected to complete the sentence with 'me' if the toy spider had been placed on the child. Yet there is no reason why the subject *should* be expected to take his/her own perspective when the sentence had been begun by the experimenter: arguably it would be equally correct to complete the sentence above with 'you' on the grounds that the child was finishing it on the experimenter's behalf. The clear-cut differences between the groups in the results obtained indicate that the LD and normal groups *did* generally understand that

they were expected to answer using their own perspective, which is somewhat surprising. As Jordan herself concedes, "The experimental task demanded a relatively sophisticated understanding of the speaker's role" (Jordan 1998:113), and it would seem to be this speaker role with which the EIA group had the greatest difficulty. Perhaps a more natural task, in which speaker switches occurred at sentence boundaries rather than mid-clause, would have elicited a better performance from the autistic children.

Jordan acknowledges that her EIA subjects' problems might be attributable to their low MLUs as compared with the control groups, rather than directly to their autism. However, she considers this unlikely given that 5 of the EIA group had MLUs higher than those of 6 of the LD group, "and yet still performed consistently and markedly worse in their production of pronouns" (Jordan 1998:113).

3.1.4.2 Experiment 2: 3rd person pronouns

Jordan's second set of experiments was designed to test for ability to understand and use 3rd person pronouns, using as subjects 12 EIA children, with a control group of 12 LD children. There were no 'normal' controls this time. For the comprehension task the experimenter, the subject and one other child were present: the subject was given instructions involving props, such as "Put the hat on you/me/him/her", where 'him' or 'her' referred to the other child present, as appropriate. In the production task the child was presented with rising-intonation sentences to complete, as in Experiment 1; but this time each incomplete sentence was preceded by a direct question, e.g.

> "Who's wearing the hat now? See! It's on ...?"
>
> (Jordan 1998:119)

She predicted that her EIA group would find 3rd person pronouns particularly difficult, due to the gender and number inflections which would make it harder to conceive of a 3rd person pronoun as a 'name' with fixed reference; moreover they would encounter 3rd person pronouns being applied to a wider range of people than 1st or 2nd person ones, which again would make it hard to 'fix' their reference.

Both the autistic group and the control group performed well on comprehension of 'you' and 'me', as in Experiment 1, and both groups fared worse with 'he/she', the autistic group considerably more so: one child seemed to interpret the 3rd person pronoun as applying to himself. As we have seen, children with EIA have been known to use 'he' to refer to themselves. Jordan believes this is a peculiarly autistic trait:

> "The third person pronoun occurs later in normal and in autistic development but its use as self reference in autism has no direct parallel in normal development, nor in the development of other developmentally disabled groups other than the blind."
>
> (Jordan 1998:117, citing Andersen et al. 1984 and Hobson 1993).

Some of the comprehension 'errors' made by the EIA group were in fact failures to respond at all or responses directed at the experimenter instead of the 'third person', which could be attributed to the child's reluctance to interact with the other child and/or a preference for the adult experimenter. The remaining 9 errors involved the subjects interpreting the 3rd person pronoun as applying to themselves. Jordan noted that those children who had a good grasp of 1st and 2nd person pronouns were probably able to figure out the reference of the 3rd person ones by a process of elimination, at least in the triadic setting of the interview. This strategy was not available to those members of the EIA group who even had severe trouble with applying 'me' and 'you' to the correct participant (Jordan 1998:143).

In the production task the LD group still performed well on 'you' and 'me' but dramatically worse on 'he/she'; whereas the autistic group performed almost as poorly on the 1st and 2nd person pronouns as on the 3rd person ones, with very few correct answers at all. Whereas the LD group sometimes used a pointing gesture instead of a 3rd person pronoun, the autistic children never used pointing: this was to be expected, since pointing depends on shared attention, which autistic children are known to lack (see section 2.1.3). Like the LD group, the autistic children sometimes used the proper name of the correct referent in place of a pronoun; but they also tended to name "the object being manipulated rather than the person affected" (Jordan 1998:125).

Jordan was correct, then, in predicting that both groups would find 3rd person pronouns harder. They additionally had more difficulty with production than comprehension: this was also to be

expected, because "the comprehension situation did not involve semantic coding of gender, for example, since only one 'third' person was present" (Jordan 1998:126), whereas in production the child had to decide whether the pronoun should be 'him' or 'her'. The children's failure to grasp the "speaker principle" and their resulting strategy of trying to 'fix' referents to pronouns can account for the errors encountered.

3.1.4.3 Observational findings

Thirdly, Jordan observed the spontaneous production of deictic pronouns in another group of children with EIA. She believed that, unlike normal children, her autistic subjects might actually have performed better in the experimental situations, with their one-to-one setting and clear instructions. To observe autistic children's performance in more natural settings, she elicited narratives from her subjects using pictures and hypothetical situations as cues. However, she found only one actual pronoun 'reversal' and few errors as a whole (although she used figures expressing the number of correct deictic pronouns as a function of the total number of *utterances*, rather than as a function of the total number of instances where a pronoun was possible or required: this rather surprising choice of statistical measure is never explained). The children showed no reluctance to talk about themselves, or to use 'I'; they also used 2nd and 3rd person pronouns correctly. However, as Jordan notes, this group consisted of "verbally able individuals", all aged over 10 years and with MLUs ranging from 4.9 to 8.51 (Jordan 1998:128 (Table 5.8); 1998:131).

3.1.4.4 Other findings

Jordan conducted further experiments to examine whether autistic children had particular difficulties with gender ('he' vs. 'she') or number ('him/her' vs. 'them'). Her autistic group made a few more errors in their comprehension than the LD controls, but the differences were not statistically significant (Jordan 1998:158).

3.1.5 Summary

While the terms 'pronominal reversal' and 'pronoun reversal' are prevalent in the literature, it can be seen from the discussion so far that these are simplistic and possibly misleading labels: an autistic child may substitute 'you' for 'I' but not vice-versa, or they may substitute something other than a second-person pronoun (such as 'he/she' or their own name) for a first-person form, or they may use the wrong case ('I' for 'me'). Jordan concludes from her studies that "there is in fact little in the way of actual reversal" (Jordan 1998:12). Moreover the term 'reversal' could be viewed as objectionable because it is adult-centred. I shall follow Jordan's (1998) practice in retaining the term 'pronoun reversal' as convenient shorthand for the general phenomenon under discussion, but denoting it in 'scare quotes' to indicate that it is problematic.

3.2 Pronoun usage by individuals with Aspergers' Syndrome

While pronoun 'reversal' is one of the diagnostic criteria for EIA according to DSM-III-R (American Psychiatric Association 1987), it does not feature in any of the four diagnostic lists currently in use for AS, discussed by Attwood 1998. The four are those of Gillberg & Gillberg 1989; Szatmari, Bremner & Nagy 1989; DSM IV, American Psychiatric Association 1994; and ICD-10, World Health Organisation, 1993. The first two of these mention other speech and language peculiarities such as "formal pedantic language" (Gillberg & Gillberg) or "idiosyncratic use of words" (Szatmari et al.), while DSM IV and ICD-10 list only social and behavioural abnormalities, not linguistic ones. Whether AS can involve language delay is a point of contention: Gillberg & Gillberg list it as a possible (though not essential) diagnostic criterion; Szatmari et al. make no specific mention of delayed language acquisition either way, but DSM IV and ICD-10 both specify that there is *no* "clinically significant general delay" in language. Attwood comments that this is unfortunate since it "may be interpreted as an absence of any unusual qualities in language skills" (1998:68). In any case it may even be untrue: C. Gillberg (1991:142) reports that 17 of the 23 AS children he had seen over a ten-year period "were slow to start talking, according to parental report".

In fact, as Asperger himself noted, these children exhibit a range of linguistic abnormalities, such as unusual prosody (a "sing-song" voice was common), not responding to questions, and coining original words.

In one of his four documented cases, Fritz V., the pragmatic anomalies are reflected in inappropriate use of second-person pronouns:

> "Fritz did not know the meaning of respect and was utterly indifferent to the authority of adults. He lacked distance and talked without shyness even to strangers. Although he acquired language very early, it was impossible to teach him the polite form of address ('Sie'). He called everybody 'Du'."
>
> (Asperger[1944] 1991:40)

Asperger seems to have viewed Fritz's inappropriate pronoun usage as a manifestation of the socialisation problems typical of autistic children, which he went on to describe in some detail:

> "Autistic children ... lack completely any respect for the other person. They treat everyone as an equal as a matter of course and speak with a natural self-confidence. In their disobedience too their lack of respect is apparent. They do not show deliberate acts of cheek, but have a genuine defect in their understanding of the other person."
>
> (Asperger[1944] 1991:81)

However, in the light of what is now known about the three types of impairment in autism, it seems more appropriate to classify Fritz's over-familiar pronouns as difficulties with pragmatic aspects of language rather than with socialisation. This is a more subtle type of pronoun misuse than the 1st/2nd person 'reversals' exhibited by Kanner's patients: moreover, it can only be evidenced in languages which, unlike modern English, make a distinction between 'familiar' and 'polite' second-person forms. The historical origin of this dichotomy - in many languages a grammatical contrast between singular and plural - has been described in Chapter 1, along with the social consequences of failing to switch between the forms according to the power/solidarity status of the interlocutor. Children or adults with AS who speak languages like German will clearly be at a social disadvantage if they cannot be taught to appreciate these rules of communicative competence, as Asperger's somewhat disapproving comments indicate.

More recent evidence comes from Baltaxe & Simmons (1977), who found that the German autistic adolescents they studied were apparently unable to distinguish between 'du' and 'Sie' and would use them interchangeably in the same utterance to refer to the same interlocutor.

It seems, then, that children with AS *can* exhibit problems with their pronouns. Attwood, in describing the diagnostic assessment procedure for the syndrome, states:

> "A record is also made of incidents of the misuse of personal pronouns, e.g. using their Christian name rather than me or I ..."
>
> (Attwood 1998:21).

Clearly this is because children with AS have been known to exhibit this feature:

> "There can also be a tendency to talk in the third person, i.e. not using 'I' as the appropriate personal pronoun, but referring to themselves as he (or she)."
>
> (Attwood 1998:149)

However, Attwood here is describing monologues rather than dialogues: the person is vocalising his/her inner thoughts rather than attempting communication. He does not mention whether children or adults with AS have been known to misuse pronouns in dialogue, or whether they ever use 'you', rather than a third-person form, in place of 'I'.

The poem quoted at the beginning of this chapter recalls "saying yours, and meaning mine" - a clear reference to 1st/2nd person pronoun 'reversal'. The author, Vanessa Regal, is described as having AS but Attwood does not tell us whether she had previously been diagnosed as having EIA: the pronoun 'reversals' could have occurred at an earlier stage.

Baltaxe (1977) found that high-functioning adolescents used more nouns and full noun phrases than appropriate, as compared with pronouns. Szatmari et al. (1990) found more examples of echolalia and pronoun 'reversal' in their "high-functioning autistic" group of subjects than in their "Asperger's" subjects, but in general the differences between the two groups were so negligible that they concluded that "Asperger's syndrome should be considered a mild form of high-functioning autism". Finally, Ramberg et al. (1996) found that pronoun 'reversals' are not typical of high-functioning autistic children beyond the age of 7.

3.3 Why do autistic children produce pronoun 'reversals'?

3.3.1 No concept of self / Rejection of self

One possible explanation is that these children lack any sense of identity and simply do not have the ability to discriminate between themselves and other people, thus literally having no understanding of the difference between 'you' and 'me'. Kanner asserts that "the emergence from the neonatal stage of biological helplessness is not, as in the average infant, accompanied by a progressively differentiated contact with the human environment" (Kanner [1954] 1973a:69).

The notion is spelt out more explicitly by Kanner and Eisenberg when they give two detailed examples of typically "inconsiderate" behaviour by an autistic child and an autistic adult, describing it in terms such as "lack of awareness of the feelings of others, who seem not to be conceived of as persons like the self ... It was as if he did not distinguish people from things, or at least did not concern himself about the distinction ... failure to recognize others as entities separate from oneself ..." ([Kanner and Eisenberg 1956] Kanner 1973a:95). According to Hobson (1990), such recognition of others as subjective persons is a necessary precondition for development of self-consciousness, "so that the concepts of self and other develop in tandem" (Jordan 1998:51).

Kanner does not seem to have seriously entertained the idea that autistic children lacked a sense of selfhood, and all his evidence points to the opposite conclusion: that these children were so self-absorbed that they actively rejected any intervention from agencies which they clearly perceived as 'other'. It is by now well established that autistic children can recognise their own reflections in a mirror[5] at the same age as normal children (Dawson and McKissick 1984), and can recognise the faces of other people as readily as controls of the same verbal IQ (Ozonoff et al. 1990, Smalley and Asarnow 1990). Moreover, not all autistic children are 'aloof and indifferent': autistic social behaviour at the high-functioning/AS end of the spectrum may manifest itself in the child making "bizarre one-sided approaches" (Wing 1991a:112). Therefore, crude cognitive accounts of the 'no sense of identity' variety must be rejected. Lee et al. (1994) tested autistic children against a control group with learning difficulties, using photographs as the basis for questions about self and other. They found that the autistic children did understand the questions, but avoided pronouns in their answers, using proper names instead.

Nonetheless, while autistic children - even at the low-functioning end of the spectrum - seem to have a strong sense of their own agency, it does seem that their concept of others as autonomous agents is impaired. Children with EIA simply treat other humans as objects, while people with AS may treat them as conversational partners but fail to appreciate that they may have different feelings or opinions (e.g. they may not find the topic of train timetables as gripping as the adolescent with Asperger's Syndrome does). If Hobson is right about notions of "self" and "other" developing in tandem, then this means that the autistic child's sense of self is also impaired: as Jordan puts it, he/she has difficulty in establishing an 'experiencing self' (Jordan 1998:63), which leads to problems in developing personal episodic memory or maintaining a coherent narrative (Bruner & Feldman 1993). Hobson views personal pronoun usage as an expression of interpersonal relations, and attributes the deviant pronoun usage of autistic children to their incomplete sense of "self" and "other" (Hobson 1993).

This would suggest that when 'pronoun-reversing' EIA children 'grow out' of the phase they have reached some kind of cognitive threshold, perhaps the beginnings of a 'theory of mind' as discussed in the previous chapter (2.1.3), marking an emerging ability to conceive of other people's ideas and intentions. Jordan also predicts that

> "personal pronouns would appear first in autism as applied to the individual 'from the outside' and only later, if at all, as a reflection of a purposeful experiencing self."
>
> (Jordan 1998:65)

A variation on this theme is that autistic children do not so much *lack* a concept of self as *reject* their self-identity for psychopathological reasons. Bettelheim, whose 'psychodynamic' explanations for autism have been critically discussed earlier (see 2.3.1), explicitly claimed that autistic people avoided the pronoun 'I', even if their verbal behaviour was echolalic (Bettelheim 1967). This he attributed to a self-rejection from lack of "bonding".

Theories which claim that children with EIA cannot properly distinguish 'self' from 'other', or avoid 'I/me', cannot account for the experimental evidence (such as Jordan's, reviewed in 3.1.4 above) that autistic children have few problems in *comprehending* the intended referents of 1st and 2nd person pronouns but severe difficulties in *producing* them.

3.3.2 Part of echolalia

An explanation based on cognition rather than emotion, yet which is no less crude than Bettelheim's, is offered by Rutter (1966). Rutter attributes autistic pronoun 'reversals' to deficits in short term memory resulting in only the last part of an utterance being recalled. Since 'I' most frequently occurs in sentence-initial position - and moreover is commonly less salient in auditory terms due to being unstressed - it would be more likely than other pronouns to be omitted. Bartak and Rutter (1974) confirmed this hypothesis experimentally by presenting three-word sentences to their young subjects in which the pronouns 'I', 'you', 'he', 'she' and 'me' were all presented in each of the three possible positions. They found that 'I' was not avoided when the factor of sentence position was controlled. Some children echoed the last word only, while others echoed the entire sentence. Similarly, Jordan found that her subjects actually exhibited a *preference* for 'I', sometimes substituting it for 'you' and more frequently using 'I' when 'me' was the appropriate form: this latter probably being an example of the "over-pedantic speech" typical of autism (Jordan 1998:114).

Kanner himself was in no doubt that the phenomenon was attributable to echolalia, which in turn was due to the child's desire for "sameness":

> "Parroted phrases are retained and later, in a sort of delayed echolalia, employed exactly as heard, even with the same intonation; this accounts for the phenomenon of pronominal reversals which persists for several years. Thus, when the child wishes to retire, he may echo a sentence used often by his mother: 'Now I am going to put you to bed.'"
>
> (Kanner [1954] 1973a:71; cf. Kanner 1972:700-701.)

The example given here (which does not appear to come from Kanner's case histories and may be invented) certainly looks like delayed echolalia. However, Kanner gives other examples which cannot be literal repetitions of what has been said by an adult, e.g. "Give it to you!" produced by Charles N., Case 9 in the original 1943 study.

Bartak & Rutter (1974) claim that delayed echolalia can explain apparent pronoun reversals in many autistic children, such as "Do you want a drink?" used to *request*, rather than offer, a drink. If they are correct then it is clearly inaccurate to speak of 'pronoun reversal', or even of any specific pronoun problems whatsoever, since:

> "it is not clear that the 'you' is being used for self reference instead of 'me' or 'I' since there is no evidence that the child intends any self reference at all. 'You' is simply part of a learned phrase, repeated as a single 'chunk', that has become established as a way of getting needs met - the child is given a drink."
>
> (Jordan 1998:101).

Jordan dubs this use of delayed echolalia "verbal behaviour", after Skinner (1957), "in that certain expressions have become reinforced in certain situations" (Jordan 1998:104). The label seems particularly apposite when one considers Wing's observation that many of her "passive" autistic group had "echopraxia as well as echolalia": that is, they imitated others' *actions* as well as their speech (Wing 1991b:128). This characteristic is not widely mentioned in the literature on autistic children, but perhaps it should be.

Jordan continues:

> "The tendency to echo is indeed an adequate explanation for this kind of 'pronoun reversal'. What remains uncertain is whether or not this is happening in all cases of pronoun reversal."
>
> (ibid.)

Wing (1991a:112-113, Table 3.2) presents a chart summarizing the symptoms of children at various points along the autistic continuum. Under the heading "Language - formal system" she gives "No language" for the most severely handicapped cases and "grammatical but long-winded" for the least severely handicapped. Of interest here, however, are the two intermediate categories. Point 2 on her scale (i.e. nearer the low-functioning end of the continuum) gives "limited - mostly echolalic", whereas point 3 gives "Incorrect use of pronouns, prepositions; idiosyncratic use of words/phrases; odd constructions". For Wing, therefore, there is a clear distinction between echolalic language use (which must include incorrect pronoun usage by definition, although she does not say so) and incorrect use of pronouns which is **not** echolalic.

Conversely, it is possible to produce echolalia without pronoun 'reversal', i.e. the phrase is not repeated entirely verbatim but is adapted to be grammatically and pragmatically appropriate. Modifications of this kind are documented in Fay (1980). The question remains why autistic children often do *not* mitigate their pronoun usage when they repeat something.

3.3.3 General tendency to reverse words

Another possibility is that autistic children tend to reverse 'opposite' terms in general and that this tendency is not restricted to pronouns. Attwood (1993:14) claims to have observed that "some children develop a reasonable spoken vocabulary but use 'Yes' when 'No' was intended and vice versa". Unfortunately no references or evidence are offered in support of this claim and it appears to be based entirely on personal, anecdotal data. In the absence of hard evidence that there is a more general trend, this explanation of 'pronoun reversal' must be disregarded.

3.3.4 General tendency to assign fixed meanings to words

One detailed account of a child's misuse of 'yes' is provided by Kanner in the case of Donald, whose pronoun 'reversals' have already been described in section 3.1.1:

> "His father, trying to teach him to say 'yes' and 'no', once asked him, 'Do you want me to put you on my shoulder?'
>
> Don expressed his agreement by repeating the question literally, echolalia-like. His father said, 'If you want me to, say "Yes"; if you don't want me to, say "No".' Don said 'yes' when asked. But thereafter 'yes' came to mean that he desired to be put up on his father's shoulder."
>
> (Kanner [1943]1973a:5)

Kanner's more meticulous explanation of Donald's problem with the meaning of 'yes' indicates that autistic children have difficulties in applying terms like 'yes' or 'no' to the pragmatics of the particular situation, and instead attempt to attach fixed meanings to these items. This, rather than a tendency to reverse the terms, might account for some of the phenomena observed by Attwood (see 3.3.3 above), and suggests an alternative explanation for pronoun 'reversals': autistic children try to attach a fixed meaning to every word they acquire.

There is considerable evidence for this in the literature: it is well known that autistic/AS children have extreme difficulty with metaphorical and idiomatic expressions, often becoming distressed by common turns of phrase such as "you'll laugh your head off" (Attwood 1993:13) or "you've got your father's eyes" (Attwood 1998:76). People with AS, whose language skills are relatively well-

developed, still fail to pick up cues indicating teasing or sarcasm on the part of their interlocutor. This is no doubt attributable to their lack of a "theory of mind"[6]:

> "Most autistic people are handicapped in the understanding of others' mental states. For such people, inferential communication - which requires the recognition of intentions - may be an unattainable goal. This would leave them, perhaps, with only coded communication, which may be what underlies the repetitious echolalic or single word instrumental speech of many less able autistic individuals."
>
> (Happé 1991:231)

In short, children with autism or AS impose a literal interpretation on language, which entails only **one** possible meaning per word or phrase. This means that they have difficulty not only with metaphors[7] but even with common words which happen to be ambiguous, since resolving the ambiguity requires the hearer to make use of context and knowledge of the speaker's intentions. Conversely, they find it equally hard to grasp the idea that a single *concept* can have more than one *label* (Ricks & Wing 1975).

Words which derive most or all of their meaning from the pragmatic context must be the most excruciating of all for children with autism. They therefore resist the inherent slipperiness of deictic terms and try to assign denotative meaning to them, which of course such items lack by their very nature.

Autistic children often give the impression that this is what they are doing when they misuse pronouns:

> "Pronoun reversal may occur because she thinks her name is you instead of I."
> (Park 1967:144)[8].

If a child has not grasped what Jordan calls the 'speaker principle' (the use of different pronouns to indicate the same person depending on who is speaking), then "pronouns may be understood and used as if they were fixed referential labels." (Jordan 1998:92). Jordan points out that it is theoretically possible for a child to fix his/her usage from the speaker's rather than the hearer's point of view, which would result in addressing others correctly as 'you' but expecting them to continue to use 'you' in self-reference when taking their own turn at speaking. She remarks that such cases are "unsupported in the literature" (Jordan 1998:93), but it is arguable that such a strategy might go

unnoticed since it does not result in production errors, only failures of comprehension. Examples of children apparently fixated in the *hearer* role, by contrast, are numerous. Jordan appears to believe that her own experimental findings can be explained on this basis, but as I have argued above (3.1.4.1) the inconsistencies between her subjects' production of 'I' and 'me' render her claims problematic.

Jordan also notes that the 'speaker principle' can apply to third person pronouns if someone previously being talked about ('he'/'she') becomes either the speaker ('I') or the hearer ('you') (Jordan 1998:92).

If this hypothesis is correct, then we would expect to see evidence that autistic children experience difficulties with other items of person deixis apart from pronouns, e.g. time and place deixis like 'here/there' and 'last night/tomorrow'. The evidence here is somewhat mixed: Bartolucci and Albers (1974) and Rees (1984) provide some support for it, but Jordan (1982) found that deixis relating to time or place was not affected in her subjects.

3.3.5 Difficulties with turn-taking and speaker roles

Individuals with no 'theory of mind' will be incapable of functioning adequately as conversational partners: since they cannot conceive what their interlocutor's intentions are, they will not know when to yield up their turn or change topic. Even if autistic children could grasp the 'speaker principle' - which, as we have seen, they cannot (see sections 3.1.4.1 and 3.3.4), this in itself would not be sufficient to maintain a satisfactory dialogue: "in order to mark a speaker role ... one must have pragmatic understanding of the listener's needs" (Jordan 1998:139). This may explain why children who apparently understand first-person pronouns as related in some way to the speaker role still have difficulty in employing 'I' and 'me' in their own utterances (ibid.).

The inability of autistic children to engage in pretend play (described in section 2.2.3) deprives them of valuable practice in switching roles, including speech roles. Normally developing children imitate both the speech and the behaviour of their peers in their play, but they make modifications as they do so; autistic children, by contrast, commonly use 'unmitigated' echolalia in which the

pronouns, like the rest of the utterance, are regurgitated whole. Jordan (1998:140) concludes that children with autism are denied the opportunity to expand their knowledge of first person pronoun usage by a combination of their failure to engage in imaginative play, their use of unmitigated echolalia and their lack of an "experiencing self" as argued by Hobson and others (see section 3.3.1).

A 'Theory of Mind' is even more essential for an understanding of second person pronouns: 'you' can be highly ambiguous and can often only be resolved by a pragmatic grasp of the speaker's intentions.

Jordan remarks:

> "Even when the addressee is present there is likely to be confusion if there is more than one other there: the listener must use eye gaze, body posture or pragmatic understanding of what the speaker intends to work out if everyone is being addressed by the 'you' or to which sub-set it refers."
>
> (Jordan 1998:141)

However, Jordan omits to mention that this ambiguity only exists in standard English, which makes no distinction between 2nd person singular and plural, nor between polite (*V*) and familiar (*T*) forms. In most other languages these distinctions of plurality and/or familiarity would be grammatically encoded, offering the hearer more clues. Whether an autistic child would be fully able to utilise such clues is an interesting question, and one deserving of further research. It was noted in 3.2 that Asperger's patient Fritz remained apparently oblivious to the distinction between 'du' and 'Sie'.

Baltaxe (1977) observed difficulties in her subjects with definite articles, relative clauses and anaphora, concluding that their cognitive deficits extended beyond turn-taking conventions to the demands of "foregrounding" or "backgrounding" verbal information. Stevenson (1988) distinguishes the cognitive loads of deictic pronouns, which only require social knowledge (interpersonal roles), from those of anaphoric pronouns which additionally require linguistic information (person, number, gender). This would appear to be an over-simplification, ignoring the undeniably deictic properties of pronouns like 'she' and 'it' (Brener 1983; Wales 1996:6-7).

In any event, though, De Villiers and De Villiers (1974) are surely right when they state that interpersonal pronouns 'I' and 'you' can only be understood correctly by "non-egocentric" individuals, i.e. those who are capable of negotiating the context of the relationship between the speaker and the addressee.

3.3.6 Summary

Psychodynamic theories which claim that autistic children lack a sense of self can be safely rejected; however, the inability of EIA children to form second-order representations or develop a 'theory of mind' inevitably impairs their concepts of 'self' and 'other', and thus affects their pronoun usage in more subtle ways, by hindering their acquisition of interactive discourse skills. While some apparent pronoun 'reversals' can be attributed to echolalia, there is also clear evidence from experimental work that autistic children have difficulty in using pronouns correctly in elicited speech, often identifying the correct referent but using his/her proper name instead of a pronoun. There is no real evidence for a tendency to reverse semantic 'pairs' of words in general, and even if there were this would not account for the pronoun phenomena, many of which are not in fact reversals at all. The most plausible explanation is that autistic children (a) have problems with variable meanings in general and deictic items in particular, and try to attach a fixed meaning to each word they learn; and (b) have difficulty in learning the rules of turn-taking and switching between hearer and speaker roles, with the changes thereby entailed in pronominal use for the same referents within the same speech event.

3.4 At what age or stage of development do the 'reversals' cease?

Kanner & Eisenberg were certain that the pronoun 'reversals', like the echolalia in general, had a limited lifespan:

> "Aside from the recital of sentences contained in the ready-made poems or other remembered pieces, it took a long time before they put words together for the purpose of oral communication with others. Even then, phrases heard were taken over in their totality, often with the same inflection, and reproduced in the form of what one might call delayed echolalia. This brought about the phenomenon of pronominal reversals, which continued into or beyond the sixth year of life, until

> eventually a give-and-take kind of conversation could be established with varying degrees of spontaneously communicating content."
>
> ([Kanner & Eisenberg 1955] Kanner 1973a:82).

More specifically, Kanner states:

> "The pronominal fixation remains until about the sixth year of life, when the child gradually learns to speak of himself in the first person, and of the individual addressed in the second person. In the transitional period, he sometimes still reverts to the earlier form or at times refers to himself in the third person."
>
> (Kanner 1948:718).

In a diachronic review of 42 cases, Kanner & Eisenberg assert that:

> "As adolescents, they have retained the primary characteristics of the condition and have lost some of the earlier secondary symptoms, such as echolalia and pronominal reversals."
>
> ([Kanner & Eisenberg 1955] Kanner 1973a:88).

More recent accounts tend to support the age of 5 as being some kind of threshold for "emergence": Wing, for instance, describes an adult AS patient identified as "the train enthusiast", who as a child "developed good grammar, though he referred to himself in the third person till he was four or five." (Wing 1991a:97).

After examining many more autistic children and following up their later progress, Kanner was able to venture more specific claims about those children who had eventually been able to emerge from their aloneness:

> "What characterizes our group [i.e. the successful ones] is a steady succession of stages: No initiative or response - immediate parroting - delayed echolalia with pronominal reversals - utterances related to obsessive preoccupations - communicative dialogue with the proper use of personal pronouns and greater flexibility in the use of prepositions."
>
> (Kanner 1973c:209)

Kanner's reference to "utterances related to obsessive preoccupations" as the stage immediately following "pronominal reversals" may prove to be highly significant: perhaps this is the escape route for those EIA children who do overcome their problems with pronouns. Jordan views these obsessive utterances in a positive light as evidence of conative faculties, speculating that:

> "a willingness to engage in highly motivated monologues about themselves might ... be a facilitating factor in these children with autism having gained mastery over first person pronoun usage and thus having led to an understanding of all deictic pronouns."
>
> (Jordan 1998:145)

It is clear that only a minority of the children passed through all of these stages, and some only did so at a very delayed rate, such as Brad, who is described as indicating "partial emergence" in April 1968:

> "Brad, now 9½ years of age, would, if we depended entirely on psychometric measurement, not go beyond the 4-year level. Since the last evaluation (more than about a year and half [sic] ago) he has been doing quite a bit of echolalia and also indulged in very limited spontaneous speech, some of it in terms of gibberish."
>
> (Kanner 1973d:232)

Unfortunately we are not told whether Brad's "echolalia" included pronoun 'reversals', but Kanner's earlier claims that autistic children ceased doing either of these by around the age of 6 seem to be in need of revision in the light of cases like Brad's. Nor is it true that Brad had reached the upper limits of his communicative competence by this point, since Kanner examined him again in January 1973 and reported "Brad managed to develop communicative speech which he used spontaneously" (ibid.), from which we may infer that the echolalia had eventually ceased by the age of about 13.

Simmons and Baltaxe (1975) studied seven autistic adolescents and found that only four of them could still be described as linguistically impaired. Their remaining difficulties included problems with pronouns, especially in reported speech, and "a tendency to avoid 'I'". This provides further evidence that pronoun difficulties may persist well beyond Kanner's threshold of 4-5 years.

Chronological age is, of course, an unreliable gauge of linguistic development and linguists generally prefer to use MLU, measured in morphemes. Silberg (1978) found that the autistic children in her study were producing 1st person pronouns correctly by the time they had an MLU of greater than 3.0, and 2nd person pronouns when they had reached MLU 4.0. Ramberg et al. (1996), however, set a much higher threshold, giving an MLU of 7 as the point beyond which pronominal errors were rare in "high-functioning" people with autism. All of this contrasts with normally-developing children who are believed to be using both 1st and 2nd person pronouns

correctly by MLU 2.5 (Bloom et al. 1975). It is clear that general linguistic ability cannot account for pronominal 'reversals' in autism, since in numerous studies the EIA children studied were compared with controls who were matched for MLU, verbal IQ and vocabulary level, and yet did not exhibit the difficulties that their autistic counterparts had with their pronouns. Perhaps, though, in autistic children a higher level of linguistic competence is a necessary precondition for resolving the pronominal confusion, because these children are resorting to linguistic or even metalinguistic strategies to compensate for knowledge which normal children absorb from everyday social interaction and pretend play. This would be analogous to the phenomenon described in section 2.1.3, whereby autistic children characteristically pass 'false belief' tasks at a much higher verbal mental age than normal children, as Frith and Happé have noted - arguably because they are using a different strategy to solve the tasks.

> "Whatever the difficulties are that lead to problems with deictic pronouns in autism, it appears that there is extreme delay (relative to general linguistic development) rather than a complete deficit, and it does seem that with further language development these difficulties are resolved."
>
> (Jordan 1998:127)

Tammy, aged 7;10, may perhaps be considered another "late developer" in this respect, but Kanner's account of her also alerts us to the need for caution in making generalisations about a child's linguistic development: the echolalia and pronoun 'reversals' may only occur some of the time or under certain conditions.

> "Tammy showed spontaneity only when asking for objects that she wanted. On such occasions, the sentence formation was proper, the pronouns were used adequately and there was natural intonation. Things were quite different when questions were asked of her. There was quite a bit of echolalia if she chose to respond to the question at all."
>
> (Kanner 1973d:235).

Finally, we should remember that autistic children are as much individuals as any other children: there is considerable variety between them as to the extent and nature of their echolalic behaviour. One case which struck Kanner particularly was that of Ken, another "late emerger" who was still using echolalia at the age of 10;4:

> "There was much progress in many respects since I saw Ken in December, 1966, even though basically, he remains as autistic as in the past. A great deal of echolalia is in evidence. Hardly have I ever seen an echolalic child who could use his echolalia as efficiently as this child. It serves the purpose of keeping away from any involvement."
>
> (Kanner 1973d:245)

Jordan is of the view that "personal pronouns ... are characteristically misused by individuals with autism until relatively late in development" (Jordan 1998:17), and for this very reason she considers them a valuable object of study in throwing light on the nature of autism.

3.5 Is Pronoun 'Reversal' found in Other Disorders?

Dorothy, first seen by Kanner at age 4, was not classed by him as autistic but listed under "Disorders with evidence of psychogenicity": he considered her to be emotionally disturbed due to her mother's mental illness, which at one time caused her to find herself "lying near the child and having her hands around Dorothy's throat" (Kanner 1973d:272). He did not consider her to be schizophrenic or mentally retarded either, and admitted that he found it difficult to pin a diagnostic label on her (p. 273). He describes her language at various stages as follows:

At age 3:

> "There was some echolalia in her speech, but there were also spontaneous phrases, such as 'Oh, boy,' and 'Look at.' On one occasion she used the word 'no' with emphasis but not inappropriately."
>
> (Kanner 1973d:272)

At age 5;6:

> "Her speech has improved considerably, even though an appreciable amount of echolalia is still present. On one or two occasions, Dorothy gave evidence of echolalia with pronominal reversals. ... She has made more and more friends, asking for them, in her echolalic fashion which she was able to substitute for proper requests with appropriate pronouns when prompted to do so. I do not believe that Dorothy's problem is innate."
>
> (Kanner 1973d:273-4)

At age 6;6:

> "Echolalia was no longer present in her speech and sphincter control was fully established. Also, self-destructive behavior involving severe hitting of her head was no longer in evidence."

(Kanner 1973d:274)

It can be seen from the above that Dorothy's behaviour on admission to the Linwood Children's Center contained several elements typical of autistic children, such as lack of toilet training and tendency to self-harm (see Attwood 1993:50-53) as well as the familiar linguistic traits. Nonetheless there were features which were *not* typical, such as definite right-handedness and maintenance of eye-contact. If Kanner was correct not to diagnose her as autistic, this suggests that echolalia and pronoun 'reversal' can be found in children with disabilities which lie beyond the autistic spectrum. This requires further investigation. Tager-Flusberg (1989) found that children with autism were the only group studied who reversed pronouns, but this is open to question, as will be seen in Chapter 5 of the present study.

3.5.1 Schizophrenia

As we have seen in the previous chapter (sections 2.1.1 and 2.4), autism has been entangled with schizophrenia ever since the former term was first used, and not entirely without justification: "the negative signs of schizophrenia can ... be seen as a distinctive cluster of social, communicative, and imaginative impairments" (Frith & Frith 1991:68), in other words "an exact parallel to Wing's triad of impairments" (ibid.). Just as "difficulty with second-order representations explains Wing's triad of autistic features in terms of a single cognitive deficit" (Frith & Frith 1991:71), so can the same kind of difficulty explain the schizophrenic 'triad', including the positive or florid symptoms. One might well expect to find parallels in the language abnormalities arising from the two conditions.

Schizophrenic language is typically grammatically well-formed but pragmatically odd (Frith & Allen 1988; Labov 1970; Coulthard 1985:5-6). In this respect it resembles the speech of children with AS rather than EIA. The incoherence and inappropriate choice of register (often over-formal), along with the frequently noted 'poverty of ideas' in schizophrenic speech, can be attributed to the patient's dysfunctional 'theory of mind' and thus his/her inability to assess correctly an interlocutor's communicative intentions or current state of knowledge.

Kanner describes schizophrenic speech in adults as follows:

> "The verbal expressions may seem incoherent and irrelevant; speech becomes unintelligible because of the chopping up of existing words, the condensation of several words, or the creation of new words (neologisms). The disconnection of speech may go so far as to consist of a string of apparently unrelated words, often repeated a number of times (verbigeration, word salad."
>
> (Kanner 1972:690)

More specifically, Kanner describes the "catatonic" sub-type of schizophrenia as often characterised by echopraxia and echolalia (ibid:691), which of course is reminiscent of EIA, except that the schizophrenic patient repeats words heard "without seeming to attach meaning to them" (ibid.) whereas an autistic child does often use his echolalic utterances in a meaningful way, albeit in a manner which Kanner would term "metaphorical".

In assessing any subject's speech it is always important to bear in mind the distinction between perception and production, and the need to test both kinds of ability separately: the fact that a child never *produces* a given word or construction does not mean that he/she cannot *understand* it when used by an adult. However, production is easier to record and assess, and quite inventive ways may need to be devised to test perception, such as the British Picture Vocabulary Scale (Dunn and Dunn 1982). In the case of schizophrenic subjects, there is a particularly intractable problem with assessing perception: namely, the common 'positive symptom' of auditory hallucinations - or 'hearing voices' as the experience is commonly known in lay terms.

> "Auditory hallucinations have been explained as arising when the patient perceives his own thoughts as coming from an external source ... However, it has always been difficult to explain why the 'voices' are reported by patients to talk about them in the 3rd person, and why for the same patient there can be several different voices, male as well as female."
>
> (Frith & Frith 1991:77)

I can even testify to personal experience of a schizophrenic patient who heard voices in Gujurati and a variety of English accents from people of many different ethnic groups, and obligingly translated the Gujurati utterances of her imaginary friend for me, adding the information "that's my neighbour: he's a priest, you know."

Frith and Frith go on to offer an account of why this might be so, namely that our normal second-order representations of other people's mental states are generally formulated in third-person terms,

and that in the mind of a person with schizophrenia such representations are attributed to external agencies rather than to oneself. Since they are still coded in the third person, this may be interpreted by the patient as the 'voices' talking about him/her: arguably both a speaker confusion *and* a pronoun reversal between the 1st and 3rd persons, since the patient firstly attributes the whole utterance to 'speaker X' rather than 'myself', and then interprets any 3rd person pronouns in the utterance as referring to 'myself' rather than some third party being talked about.

Frith and Frith's discussion is highly speculative here, and they offer no evidence for their assertion that schizophrenic patients hear 'voices' speaking in the 3rd person. There are plenty of anecdotal and autobiographical accounts in which the 'voices' tell schizophrenics to carry out certain actions, often with tragic consequences. Presumably these injunctions involve imperatives which by definition are 2nd person, not 3rd.

3.5.2 Semantic Pragmatic Language Disorder

Semantic Pragmatic Language Disorder (SPLD) has some features in common with Asperger's Syndrome, including echolalia, deviant prosody, problems with turn-taking and pragmatic anomalies (Bishop 1989; Brook & Bowler 1992; Shields et al. 1996).

Is SPLD distinct from autism? Probably not, according to Jordan:

> "although the diagnosis of 'semantic-pragmatic disorder' has become popular with some speech and language therapists the consensus view is that children with semantic-pragmatic disorder are a heterogeneous group most of whom would form part of the autistic spectrum of disorders."
>
> (Jordan 1998:16)

3.5.3 Down Syndrome

Down (or Down's) Syndrome (DS) is a genetic condition caused by an extra copy of chromosome 21 (trisomy 21), affecting approximately one in every 700 live births (Patterson 1999:75). To date some 300 genes located on chromosome 21 have been identified (Patterson 1999:77), so it is not surprising that the condition gives rise to a complicated pattern of disabilities.

Its main feature is mental retardation, but some 50% of DS children also have congenital heart disease (Mattheis 1999:41), and it is often associated with higher than normal occurrences of hypothyroidism, gastrointestinal problems, Hirschsprung disease, cervical spine abnormalities, respiratory infections, sleep apnoea, seizures, otitis media, congenital cataracts, strabismus, near- and far-sightedness, leukaemia, depressed immune response, obesity, accelerated ageing and Alzheimer's disease (Cohen 1999, Mattheis 1999, Pueschel 1999, Roizen 1999, Patterson 1999).

DS children often have significant communication deficits, which may be helped by the use of an augmentive communication device or sign language since their perception is often considerably ahead of their expressive abilities (Cohen 1999:25). Their communication problems are often aggravated by some degree of hearing loss, which may not emerge until their second decade and may be misinterpreted as a psychiatric disorder (Cohen 1999:22). When DS children do suffer from psychiatric disorders the symptoms (e.g. self-harm) may be more extreme. DS children are liable to exhibit behaviour problems due to their frustration in being unable to interact verbally with their environment (Cohen and Patterson 1999:50). DS children generally show a weakness in verbal short-term memory (Wang 1996): while normal adults have a short-term memory span of $7^{\pm 2}$, the young DS adults studied by Fowler (1995) and Rondal (1994, 1995) scored approximately half of this. These memory limitations, which appear to lie at the root of the linguistic difficulties, may in turn be attributable to the weaknesses in phonological perception of persons with DS (Marcell 1992): sounds which are not sufficiently salient do not get processed and stored. In general, treatment programmes tend to work on increasing the child's MLU, which is typically low in subjects with DS (Manolson 1992; Kumin 1999:149). One fifth of the parents in one British study reported that their children spoke in sentences of three words or fewer (Buckley and Sacks 1987). Moreover, DS children have problems with their grammar, particularly agreement relations: Fowler (1999:168) comments "it is distressing that grammatical function in DS tends to lag even further behind their already weak receptive vocabulary scores". Nonetheless Oelwein (1999:160) observes that most DS children who have been taught to read achieve reading scores in advance of their mental age and general ability scores. Oelwein argues that some emphasis should be placed on teaching individuals with DS to read as a way of developing a strength which can help compensate for the short-term memory deficit.

While the incidence of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) appears to be no greater in DS children than in the general population (Cohen 1999:26), the occurrence of autistic spectrum disorders would seem to be higher, with a prevalence of 5-10% (Ghaziuddin et al. 1992; Howlin et al. 1995; Cohen & Patterson 1999). However:

> "The incidence for autism in a group of children with IQs below 50 who did not have Down syndrome was 16% for Kanner's autism and 57% with other autistic spectrum disorders. On the basis of those figures, children with Down syndrome appear to have a higher incidence of autism spectrums than the general population, but a lower incidence than children with mental retardation of other etiologies."
>
> (Cohen & Patterson 1999:47)

The linguistic performance of DS children is generally lower than that of comparison groups matched for age and general cognitive function, including children with autism. However, this pattern is violated when pragmatic skills come into play:

> "Intriguingly, though still open to much interpretation, persons with autism can sometimes master complex grammatical function, far more advanced than typically seen in DS, but at the same time be far less sophisticated than persons with DS in their use of verbs and pronouns that depend on social inferencing skills"
>
> (Fowler 1999:167)

Tager-Flusberg et al. (1990) compared a group of 6 boys with EIA with a group of DS children. After analysing both groups' progress over several months in terms of MLU, productive syntax and lexical diversity, they concluded that there were "similar developmental patterns in the emergence of syntactic and morphological structures in normal, DS and autistic children" (Tager-Flusberg et al. 1990:13). Both sets of language-impaired children seemed to pass through the normal stages but at much later ages and often at much slower rates (ibid:10). The only significant difference was in the proportion of nouns and closed class words used between Stage I (MLU 1.0-2.0) and III (MLU 2.5-3.0)[9]:

> "Specifically, at the early stages of language development DS children tended to rely more heavily on closed class forms than on specific nouns, whereas the reverse pattern was found for the autistic children."
>
> (Tager-Flusberg et al. 1990:13)

Tager-Flusberg et al. note that Dooley (1976) found a similar preference for pronouns among DS children, and compare these observations for DS subjects with the findings of Bates et al. (1988) and Bloom et al. (1975), which indicate that there are individual stylistic differences among normally-developing children along the nominal/pronominal dimension. Tager-Flusberg et al. do not seem convinced, however, that the differences are simply reflections of acquisitional style as has generally been assumed.

The Flusberg Corpus, which will be used as a source of data in Chapter 5, contains speech of children with EIA matched with a group of children with DS (Tager-Flusberg and Anderson 1991). My own findings, which differ from those of Tager-Flusberg et al., are discussed in detail in 5.4.3.4.

3.5.4 Visual Impairment

Visually impaired children have some of the problems of autistic children, including pronouns: Fraiberg & Adelson 1975 noted that such children had problems with pretend play and postulated a link with their problems involving deixis. Given that autistic children are known to have deficits with shared attention and direction of gaze (discussed in 2.1.3), it is not surprising that children with visual limitations exhibit similar linguistic manifestations, which are probably attributable to a common root albeit with different underlying physical causes.

3.6 Summary

Having reviewed the literature on the phenomenon that has come to be known as the 'autistic spectrum', it is clear that there are still many unresolved questions concerning the causes of Wing's triad of impairments affecting socialisation, communication and imagination. Several other disorders can also manifest themselves in some of the symptoms found in autistic children, and may be attributable to the same cognitive deficits. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to determine all these issues, but two areas which have been under-explored to date are (a) a comparison between the pronoun usage of autistic and normally-developing children and (b) the interaction between the patterns in pronoun usage by children and those of their adult care-givers. It is to these areas that I now turn.

Notes

1. Another poem in Attwood (1998:42) is attributed to Vanessa *Royal*. One suspects that Royal and Regal are the same person, one or both names being a pseudonym. I attempted to correspond with Attwood to resolve the issue but was unsuccessful in this.

2. A minimum of 8 of the 16 must be present for a diagnosis of autism, at least 2 of these coming from the "social interaction" group.

3. The children's lack of response to speech had, in seven out of Kanner's eleven cases, been so absolute that deafness had initially been suspected.

4. Appropriately enough there is a problem with the pronouns here in the original Dutch: van Krevelen refers to the utterance in question as "de tegen zichzelf geuite troostwoorden", "the words of comfort uttered to herself". The use of the reflexive pronoun *zich*zelf, as opposed to *haar*zelf, implies that it was *the child comforting herself* on the first as well as the second occasion that the utterance was heard (what one might term 'delayed self-echolalia'), rather than that she first heard an adult say it to her and later repeated it. If this is really what the author meant, it still leaves open the question of where the girl got the expression from on the first known occasion: I am assuming that she must have heard an adult say it at some point previously.

   Thanks are due to Willem Meijs for pointing out the linguistic subtleties here.

5. Compare van Krevelen's account of his four-year-old patient, who not only recognised herself in the mirror but behaved in a quite narcissistic manner:

   "Her behaviour in front of the mirror is most remarkable. Instead of reacting to the biscuit which is visible in the mirror, the girl devotes her attention exclusively to her reflection. She strokes and kisses this repeatedly, is totally absorbed in it and laughs with pleasure in the process. She remains occupied with this for a considerable time and cannot be diverted from it."
   (van Krevelen 1952:203, my translation)

   This is in complete contradiction to Neuman & Hill's findings (1978) that in comparison with controls their subjects showed much less emotional engagements with their own images and made no attempt to play with them. Clearly this is an area for further research.

6. In fact Happé argues that in order to process irony, interrogatives or exclamatives it is necessary to have not only a first-order but a second-order theory of mind, while "anyone who has first-order theory of mind should be able to operate with ordinary assertions and imperatives" (Happé 1991:236).

7. Kanner's use of the phrase "metaphorical language" (Kanner 1946) is misleading: what he is describing is delayed echolalia in circumstances where the autistic individual's state of mind evokes the original utterance. See Jordan 1998:13 for discussion.

8. Park also reports that her autistic daughter found nouns easier to use than pronouns.

9. The subdivisions of MLU stages are taken from Brown (1973).

CHAPTER 4: NORMALLY-DEVELOPING CHILDREN'S ACQUISITION OF PRONOUNS

I'll share your toys, I'll share your money,
I'll share your toast, I'll share your honey,
I'll share your milk and your cookies too -
The hard part's sharing mine with you.

Shel Silverstein

4.1 Introduction

Happé (1994a:37) includes pronoun 'reversal' among her list of "language problems which emerge as specific to autism (and not due merely to developmental delay, or to superimposed additional specific language impairment)." It is the contention of this thesis that pronoun 'reversal' is *not* specific to autism. It is now time to examine the pronouns of children who do *not* have autism, AS or any other known disorder affecting language.

4.1.1 Pronoun acquisition in normally-developing children

One of the few things that can safely be claimed uncontroversially about normal children's pronoun acquisition is that it is not the earliest manifestation of their language learning. Boezewinkel (1995:5) gives examples from English, French, Dutch, German and Italian to illustrate the tendency among children to omit pronouns altogether in their early speech (ages 1;6 to 2;0), along with articles and other function words, using their own names where adults would use first-person pronouns. There are those within the TGG school who attribute this to a discontinuous 'Maturation' process whereby children pass through an early (and of course universal) stage at which no function words or functional categories (e.g. case) are available to them. Boezewinkel gives a good illustration[1] of how the constraints of this doctrine lead its advocates to indulge in ad-hoc counter-intuitive (and indeed counter-evidential) pleading; the adherents of the 'Continuity' theory (such as Pinker) seem to have fewer difficulties. In fact even if children omit pronouns at this stage there may be person inflections present in verbs, which could be seen as embryonic pronouns and certainly provide evidence that functional categories are already present. Hyams (1992) would seem to drive the final nail into the coffin of the Maturation theory by giving examples of an Italian

child aged 1;11 using the correct 1st and 2nd person pronouns in the appropriate cases, followed by verbs agreeing in number and gender. I will therefore make no further attempt to locate this discussion within a TGG framework, and will instead move on to give an overview of the research which has been conducted on pronoun acquisition to date. When do pronouns first appear, and in what order? What is the evidence that normal children make errors in their pronoun usage, including 'reversals' of 1st and 2nd person forms? I will review the literature for Dutch as well as English in an attempt to gain insights into possible differences between languages, and in preparation for the empirical study in the following chapter which will examine Dutch as well as English corpus data, again with the aim of discerning to what extent the patterns found are language-dependent.

4.1.1.1 Age and MLU

A number of researchers have claimed developmental thresholds for the correct use of pronouns by normally-developing children. Bloom et al. (1975) claim that the 1st and 2nd person pronouns are used correctly by MLU 2.5.

For Dutch, Tinbergen (1919) gives 2;4 as the age when pronouns first appear, while Kaper (1985) found a range of ages for different children: 1;10, 2;4 and 2;9.

4.1.1.2 Order of Acquisition: English

Boezewinkel claims confidently, apparently with reference to universals rather than just to her own Dutch data, that "Pronouns in the first person appear first in child language" (1995:7, my translation), and while she does not state her basis for this assertion it does indeed seem to be the received wisdom in the field. Silberg (1978) gives perhaps the earliest and most explicit statement that 'my' and 'mine' come first, followed by 'I' and then 'you': 'he/she' are acquired last of the singular forms. Vainikka (1993/4) postulates two stages: the first, around the age of 2;0, involves overgeneralisations in the 1st person singular, while by the second, between 2;6 and 3;0, the child has acquired a range of pronouns and again overgeneralises his/her usage of them. Brener (1983)

found that young children often interpreted 3rd person pronouns as speaker or addressee pronouns, again confirming that 3rd person forms are acquired last.

However, there is the complication of the use of proper names which several researchers mention. Powers (1993) claims that the English-acquiring child goes through a stage of using its own name in place of 'I', though also using 'I' correctly at the same time; then there is a phase of using 'me' and 'my' as subject, finally followed by correct use of all pronouns. "Durkin (1987) found that mothers use the child's name when addressing him/her to command attention and direct behaviour. It may be that the child copies this adult usage." (Jordan 1998:96).

Some of the research is more concerned with errors of case than with those involving person: Fay (1980), for instance, studied the use of 'I' vs. 'me' rather than 'I' vs. 'you'. Clark (1978) asserts that 'me' is acquired earlier than 'I', arguing that 'I' is only used in fixed expressions. Brown (1973) similarly notes that normal children often substitute 'me' for 'I'; Jordan (1998:114) points out that he makes no mention of them doing the opposite, whereas her EIA subjects commonly substituted 'I' for 'me', which she attributed to the general autistic tendency to hyper-correctness.

Jordan compared a sample of her grandson Joshua's spontaneous speech with the results of the experimental perception task (as in her second experiment, described in 3.1.4.2). Joshua had no difficulty in understanding the referents of 'you', 'me' and 'her', producing no errors; but in the production task he used 'Granny', 'Joshua' and 'Mummy' respectively in every case, i.e. the correct referent but the wrong label. In the spontaneous situations he produced 42 correct deictic pronouns and only one inappropriate or ambiguous use of 'I' and three of 'you'. Jordan notes that his rate of correct pronouns per utterance was lower than her "verbally able autistic" group; but as I commented in 3.1.4.3, this is a dubious measure in the first place.[2] While the pronouns he did use were usually the correct ones, he entirely omitted to use any 3rd person pronouns and was more likely (72% of the time) to use his interlocutor's name than 'you': the few spontaneous instances of 'you' which were recorded were probably parts of unanalysed 'chunks' such as 'thank you' (Jordan 1998:135). His usage of 'I'/'me' was much better, only being replaced by his name or an incorrect pronoun on 28% of occasions. This tends to confirm the canonical picture of 1st, 2nd and 3rd person pronouns being acquired (in terms of production at least) in that order.

Charney (1980) also compared productive with perceptive abilities, with more complicated results. She found that 'my' preceded 'your' in the productive speech of her 18-30 month old subjects, but for comprehension the picture was reversed: thus the 1st person pronoun was often produced before it was understood. Charney argues that children do not initially encode speech roles in pronouns; what they refer to is a kind of person+role hybrid, a "person in speech role". She asserts that if children only used pronouns to refer to persons they would produce more 'reversals', but her research revealed few such errors. Charney claims, moreover, that children learn to use 'I' correctly as they increasingly take an "assertive" role, vocalising their intentional, independent actions (as opposed to imitative ones). Jordan (1998:137) comments that perhaps "it is a failure to take this assertive role apropos interactions and to take on a role conceptually, rather than merely to imitate actions, that may contribute to the prolonged difficulty in resolving personal deixis that characterises autism."

Chiat (1981) disagrees with this, arguing - rather as Clark (1978) does for 'I' - that the child is at first using 'my' in fixed expressions without any understanding of the role. Chiat argues that children's pronouns are "plurifunctional" and that normally developing children do NOT usually assume 'pronoun=name' as a working hypothesis. Chiat also argues (1986) that 3rd person pronouns are harder - apart from inanimate 'it' - because the animate forms vary according to gender and case, hence they are later acquired than 1st and 2nd person forms: the 1st person singular is acquired first but not necessarily differentiated. 'It' is acquired at the same time; 2nd person forms come later. Like Charney, Chiat (1986) claims that few normal children go through a 'reversing' stage.

Clark (1978) claims that a child's earliest words always include a deictic item, often in combination with a gesture. She found three stages in acquisition of speaker-addressee contrast: (a) use of 'I' alone, no contrast; (b) I/you reversal in some children; (c) correct contrast. 'I' may alternate with the child's name at first. However, the first contrast to emerge is 'I'/'you', at 2;6 - 3;0.

Wales' study of 19 month-olds (1986) adds further support to the consensus that 1st and 2nd person pronouns emerge first, reporting that gestural pointing was needed to aid the understanding of 3rd person pronouns but not the 'interpersonal' forms.

Murphy (1986) examined older children's (age 7-8) comprehension of pronouns and other deictic items. They had fewer problems when participating directly in a conversation; more when merely observing.

4.1.1.3 Order of Acquisition: Dutch

Boezewinkel (1995:29) points out that, unlike adults, children have the option of expressing pronominal reference deictically. Although she does not say so explicitly, I presume she means this literally: young children's discourse invariably inhabits the "here and now" (Clark and Clark 1977:322) and so there is always the possibility of pointing at their referent. Boezewinkel dismisses on empirical grounds both Radford's (1990) and Vainikka's (1993/4) assertion that pronouns cannot be used until the child has acquired the feature 'case', and Hyams and Hoekstra's(1994) claim that pronouns cannot appear at all if the feature 'number' is underspecified, suggesting instead that 'number' is not an essential element of pronoun usage until the child begins to use plural pronouns in contrast with the earlier-acquired singular ones.

Bol and Kuiken (1986) claim that 1st, 2nd and 3rd person singular pronouns appear simultaneously, followed later by the 1st person plural 'wij' and finally the 2nd and 3rd person plurals 'jullie' and 'zij/ze' respectively. This is at variance with the near-consensus for English (see 4.1.1.2), and indeed everyone else's findings for Dutch (see below), that production of the 1st person singular precedes the 2nd and 3rd person forms.

Schaerlaekens and Gillis (1987), also examining the early speech of Dutch children, find like Powers (1993) that children go through a phase of using their own names instead of 1st person pronouns; thereafter two of the six children in their study moved straight to correct use of 'ik' (= 'I') while three first used the accusative 'mij' as subject and one vacillated between 'ik', 'mij' and the child's own name. Kaper (1985) has similar findings but expresses them differently, stating that 'ik' appears around the same time as proper names do and in fact functions as a proper name for the child. Boezewinkel (1995) notes the ages at which her subjects Sarah and Laura first produced each type of recorded pronoun usage.[3] She charts Sarah's pronoun acquisition in detail, starting with the production of 'mij' as subject in place of 'ik' at 1;7, followed closely by 'ikke' (see below) and a

version of her own name used as subject, then the standard form 'ik' and then, at 1;10, by 'mij' in one of its correct usages, as object. Next come 2nd person singular 'jij', 3rd person singular 'ie', other 1st person singular forms, other 2nd person singular forms; then, at 2;3, 'we' followed by other plural forms and finally the remaining singular forms. Laura followed a remarkably similar order, but at a considerably later age: while Sarah had produced most of the pronouns at least once by 2;11, Laura did not reach the equivalent stage until 4;5. Boezewinkel takes the view that Sarah is precocious and Laura is more typical.

None of the researchers studying Dutch children observed any cases of 'ik' replacing 'mij' although the converse did occur. This matches the findings of Brown (1973) and others for English, as discussed in the previous section. Kaper (1985) reports that his subject Frans stopped using 'mij' as subject once he started using his own name; in the case of Boezewinkel's two subjects, though, use of 'mij' as subject persisted and overlapped with the use of the child's name for about a year, months after 2nd and 3rd person singular forms had appeared. Boezewinkel therefore rejects Schaerlaekens and Gillis's argument that the 'mij'-as-subject stage cannot be classed as pronoun usage, which begins only when the child has acquired a sense of turn-taking. She similarly rejects Powers' suggestion that pronouns only emerge after the child has emerged from the own-name phase, along with Kaper's claim that there is an initial stage in which only the accusative form occurs: "ik, mij and the [child's] own name all appear in rapid succession" (Boezewinkel 1995:99, my translation).

Boezewinkel's subjects hardly used the 2nd person plural 'jullie' at all and there were no instances of 'zij', the unstressed 3rd person plural form 'ze' apparently being preferred. In fact the unstressed forms of all the pronouns - confusingly termed "clitics" by Boezewinkel - were heavily used or even preferred by Sarah and Laura. Boezewinkel speculates that they had formed a phonological rule that the ending 'ij' becomes 'e', and overgeneralised it.

There are further complications: Dutch children are known to use the form 'ikke' which is never used by adults except when addressing children, and there are also instances of a combination of 'ikke' with 'mij' - always in that order according to Boezewinkel. Schaerlaekens and Gillis's (1987) dub this usage 'ikkemij', stating that it is used when the child wants to give emphasis to the pronoun,

and Boezewinkel concurs with this. However, it turns out from Boezewinkel's actual examples that the 'ikke' and 'mij' elements are only juxtaposed when there is no other material in the utterance. When other words are present they invariably intervene between 'ikke' and 'mij', as in 'ikke ook auto mij' *('I car too me')* and 'ikke moet vrouw zien mij' *('I must see woman me')* (Boezewinkel 1995:54). The only exception here is 'nee, ikke mij wassen' (*'no, I wash me'*) but this looks like a reflexive usage, 'mij' here functioning like 'me' *('myself')*. There are other cases of compound pronoun usage in Dutch children, such as 'ikke ik moe strakjes naar bed' *('me, I have to go straight to bed')* (ibid.) and 'nee, dis van jij jou' *('no, this [is] yours, you')* (p. 55), where two forms of the 1st and 2nd person singular pronoun, respectively, are used in immediate succession. My personal opinion is that 'ikke' is introduced to fill a pragmatic gap in the Dutch pronoun paradigm: every other pronoun has a stressed and an unstressed form (jij/je, hij/ie, zij/ze, wij/we, jullie/je) and it is logical that the 1st person singular should also have such a pair. Thus 'ikke' comes to be used for emphasis while the standard adult form 'ik' or its reduced variant "k' are used for unstressed cases. When even more emphasis is required, an additional pronoun, often of a different case, is appended to the beginning or end of the utterance, and this can occur with any person, not just the first. To talk of 'ikkemij' as if it were a lexical item, as Boezewinkel does, is misleading.

Schaerlaekens and Gillis claim (1987) that possessive pronouns appear in the same order - 1st, 2nd and 3rd persons singular, then plurals - as the personal ones, but at a later stage. Boezewinkel (1995:73) agrees with this, saying that the nominative is the first usage, followed by the accusative/dative and finally the genitive/possessive.

4.1.1.4 Other Languages

Clahsen (1990) gives examples of German children using 'ich' (='I') as young as 1;8. Hyams (1992) demonstrates that her Italian subjects do not make case errors in their pronoun usage, unlike English-learning children who may use 'me' in place of 'I'.

Clark (1978) cites Jespersen (1922) for Danish, van der Geest (1975) for Dutch and Savic (1974) for Serbian.

4.1.1.5 Pronoun Errors and 'Reversals'

Some of Jordan's experimental and observational studies on pronoun 'reversal', described in the previous chapter (3.1.4.1), used normally-developing children as controls. However, in her first experiment the youngest child among the 11 normal control subjects was 2;5, and the oldest was 9;6 (Jordan 1998:108, Table 5.1). It is hardly surprising, then, that these children exhibited hardly any errors in their comprehension, and made no reversals whatsoever in their production: any of these subjects could have gone through a pronoun-reversing stage at an earlier age.

Jordan also examined the speech of her grandson Joshua, whose mother had reported him to be reversing his pronouns from the age of 2;1. At the time of the study he was aged 2;6, with an MLU of 3.16. He was advanced for his age in terms of speech and general intelligence (Jordan 1998:132). The main characteristics of his pronoun usage were (a) using 'you' to refer to himself and (b) using names rather than pronouns for both himself and others. Jordan's detailed findings are reported in 4.1.1.2 above.

Jordan concludes that by the time of her study Joshua, at 2;6, was in a transitional stage regarding his pronoun usage: his mother had reported that he had begun to increase his use of pronouns, especially 'I', in the month preceding the test, and the data confirm this. Thus this study does not yield a snapshot of typical usage by a normal child when the 'reversal' phase is at its height.

Oshima-Takane (1992) carried out a diachronic study of a pronoun-reversing child, following him up until he acquired correct usage. Oshima-Takane believes that in order for progress to be made, children need to be able to observe pronoun use in a range of situations, not only in dyadic contexts; and suggests that attentional rather than linguistic deficits may be the major cause of 'pronominal reversal' in autism. This fits well with the literature on 'Theory of Mind' and in particular with Baron-Cohen's work (1989a) on the "Shared Attention Mechanism", discussed in 2.1.3.

Powers (1994) examines the pronoun acquisition of five Dutch children and claims that children have the same grammatical system as adults from the outset, rarely making mistakes with their pronouns. She is mostly concerned with questions of case, and then only within the first-person

singular: she claims that in Dutch, as in English, children correctly use the nominative form as subject.

In general there seems to be some agreement that children in the early stages of pronoun acquisition tend to use accusative forms in place of nominative forms, but that the reverse phenomenon is rare to non-existent. Boezewinkel, however, points out that this is not true for Dutch and looks favourably on Kaper's (1976) and Vainikka's (1993/4) theory that the default case in English is the accusative whereas in Dutch it is the nominative: compare English 'me too!' with Dutch 'ikke ook'. In Dutch the accusative *is* overgeneralized, but only for the 1st person. Boezewinkel (1995:93, footnote 46) suggests this could be because the 1st person forms are acquired first: by the time children reach the 2nd and 3rd persons they have acquired Tense, which generates nominative forms according to her TGG-based framework. Boezewinkel argues repeatedly (e.g. p. 92), following Rispoli (1993), that a form which can occur in several syntactic slots ought logically to be the one which the child overgeneralises, rather than a form which can occur in only one slot: thus, for the 2nd person in Dutch one would expect accusative/genitive/dative 'jou(w)'[4] forms rather than the nominative-only 'jij' to be overgeneralised, whereas in fact the reverse is the case. I do not share Boezewinkel's reasoning, which assumes that the number of possible syntactic slots is more salient to the child than the number of times it actually hears a particular form: a child is likely to encounter far more nominatives than datives,[5] and there is plenty of evidence in the literature (e.g. Naigles & Hoff-Ginsberg 1998; Theakston et al. 2001) that children are sensitive to the relative frequencies of lexical items in the input they receive.

Schaerlaekens and Gillis (1987) mention gender errors, which they say are persistent in the speech of their Dutch subjects, perhaps because they do not yet have a clear concept of 'natural' gender. One complication in Dutch is that 'zij/ze' can mean either 'she' or 'they': Boezewinkel (1995:25, footnote) relates a personal anecdote from van Kampen about her daughter Sarah, who refused to accept 'zij' as a correct plural form, presumably because she only knew it as a feminine 3rd person singular.

Boezewinkel, too, is mainly concerned with errors of case and gender rather than person. Some of the mistakes made by Sarah and Laura may be syntactic in origin, due to the children treating

pronouns as if they were adjectives and consequently combining them with determiners and giving them inflections: thus 'de jouwe naam' (Laura at 4;5.29) instead of 'jouw naam' *('your name')*. Other errors are phonological in origin, attributable to overgeneralisations about processes such as deletion of word-final /n/, hence 'mij' for 'mijn' etc. The remaining deviations from adult usage are classed as errors of case: scarcely any errors of number were found.

While the studies of Dutch children discussed above often refer to a period in which the child uses his/her own name instead of a 1st person pronoun, they never mention instances of proper names or relationship terms (e.g. 'mama') replacing *second* person pronouns, unlike Jordan who does find cases of this for English. Nor does any of these studies discuss errors of *person*. Boezewinkel does mention, in passing, one instance of a possible person 'reversal' made by Sarah at age 2;5.9:

S: mij, mag Laura toel mij nog.
(me, may Laura still [have] tair me.)
M: mag Laura jouw stoel?
(may Laura [have] your chair?)
M: ja hoor. *(yes of course.)*
S: ja, **jouw**. *(yes, **your.**)*
M: dat mag wel. *(that is allowed.)*
S: ja. *(yes.)*

(from Boezewinkel 1995:46: my translation in italics)[6]

Sarah's sister Laura often renders her own name as 'Jaura' or 'Jouwa', so it is possible that 'jouw' here is not a pronoun at all but a proper name. However, Sarah has pronounced Laura's name correctly in her first utterance here so this is unlikely. Boezewinkel surmises that she could mean 'my' not 'your' but is repeating the form used by her mother, taking "no account of the changing speaker-role (*your-mine*)" (Boezewinkel 1995:46, my translation). Boezewinkel seems to think that this is also unlikely because Sarah has correctly used a 1st-person form in her first utterance. I tend to disagree: my interpretation is that Sarah is acknowledging the implied correction by repeating the 'correct' pronoun as modelled by her mother, in an attempt to clarify which chair she was referring to.

4.1.2 Cognitive pre-requisites for pronoun acquisition

Smyth (1985) suggests some cognitive prerequisites for pragmatic knowledge: one example of this is perspective-taking ability as a cognitive prerequisite for understanding deictic pronouns. Similarly Bates (1976) claims there are stages in understanding deictic reference and developing shared attention strategies, and (1979) argues that giving and showing are prerequisites to the use of pointing. But Scholes (1981) argues against cognitive precursors and says it is *linguistic* knowledge that delays acquisition.

4.1.3 Pronoun 'reversals' in normally-developing children

Clark (1977, 1978) analysed diary studies of 'reversers' and concluded that these children used pronouns to refer to persons rather than roles. Loveland (1984) found that children were more likely to confuse 'I' and 'you' in comprehension than in production. She administered spatial as well as linguistic tests, and on the basis of the results grouped her subjects into three categories. Those who passed object permanence and gaze monitoring tests (but nothing else) only used 'I' and 'you' occasionally, mostly in fixed expressions. Those who passed all spatial tasks except "understanding both points of view" (presumably a Theory of Mind test) had few pronoun errors and reversals. Those who passed all spatial tasks made no pronoun errors. In a second study, Loveland (1984) found that the reciprocal usage of 'I'/'you' began at the same time as "the awareness of different points of view was complete". The few errors which did occur were attributable to echolalia.

Jordan, in discussing her findings that her autistic subjects commonly substituted proper names for 'me' or 'you', claims:

> "Some normally developing children also cope with the problems of shifting reference by use of these proper names but the fact remains that they do not wait for resolution of the speaker principle before correctly using the first person pronoun. That is, they use 'me' and 'I' in self reference while they still understand 'you' as a fixed reference for themselves."
>
> (Jordan 1998:115, citing Charney 1980).

It is the contention of this thesis that pronoun 'reversals' in normally-developing children are much more common than the authors reviewed above acknowledge. There are numerous examples of the phenomenon in child language data, both published and unpublished. What is striking is that the author presenting the data typically does not comment on the pronouns at all, presumably because the data are being presented to illustrate other features of child language. Not only are there unexpected examples of pronoun reversal to be found in the literature, but there are even examples of echolalia in non-autistic children. I offer three examples here.

C: Father. **E: Evelyn, aged 2;2.**

C He hasn't got any bedclothes on; he might get cold.
E He hasn't got any bedclothes.
C Why don't you go and get a piece of loo paper to put over him?
E Why don't you get a piece of loo paper ... Papa open the door.
C I think it is open; go and push it open.
E Push it open.
Want to open it! Want to open it!
Want to open it! Want to open it!
Want to open it! Want to open it!
Want to open it! It closed!
C Will you come and ask nicely?
E PLEASE, please Papa, want to open the door.
C OK, I'll go and open it.
E You can't open it.
C OK.

Figure 4.1 Family conversation (data from Charles Owen)

In Figure 4.1, several of Evelyn's utterances appear to consist of immediate echolalia, e.g. 'Why don't you get a piece of loo paper' and 'Push it open'. Both of these utterances are pragmatically inappropriate from an adult point of view: from the intonation it is clear that Evelyn is not using the 'you' emphatically ('why don't **you** get a piece of loo paper!'), but accepting her father's suggestion, i.e. the 'you' refers to herself (if it can be said to 'refer' at all, being part of an echolalic utterance: cf. 3.1.2, 3.3.2). Similarly, 'Push it open' is not an instruction to her father to push the door open, but accompanies her own attempts to do so at her father's suggestion: thus 'I'll push it open' or 'I'm pushing it open' would be the appropriate utterance here. Finally, 'you can't open it' seems to be a case of *non*-echolalic pronoun reversal: it is Evelyn, not her father, who is unable to open the door. His response 'OK' indicates that he is about to accede to her request and open it for her, i.e. he has not yet tried to do so at the time 'you can't open it' is uttered.

One has the impression from this dialogue that Evelyn does not use first person pronouns at all, and this is confirmed by other recordings of Evelyn's speech at this age. Evelyn either uses 'you' instead of 'I', as in 'You can't open it', or she omits the pronoun altogether, as in 'Want to open it!'. Evelyn at age 2;2, then, appears to present a counter-example to the claims reviewed in section 4.1 above, where the consensus in the literature is that 'I' appears first, at least in production (e.g. Charney 1980; Clark 1978; Chiat 1986).

My second example is from Halliday's classic monograph "Learning How to Mean". In his discussion of how Nigel used intonation to distinguish the 'pragmatic' from the 'mathetic' function, he cites

> "a typical example showing both types of utterance, the one followed by the other:
>
> Dada got scrambled èggMummy get fóryou scrambled egg
> 'Daddy's got some scrambled egg; Mummy get some scrambled egg for me!'"
>
> (Halliday 1975:76-77)

Halliday offers no comment on Nigel's use of pronouns here, but his gloss indicates that 'fóryou' is to be understood as 'for me'. Nigel's age at the time is not clearly stated, but Halliday says that the pragmatic/mathetic distinction emerged during "the last week of NL 7" and continued "for some months". This would place the utterance between the ages of 1;7½ and about 2;0.

My third example comes from a guide to questioning children in legal contexts. Here Aldridge & Wood (1998) are using their study of video-taped evidence-gathering interviews with victims of alleged abuse to illustrate the dangers of asking children "closed questions", i.e. offering the child two or more alternative answers. The child may feel under pressure to respond to such questions even if he/she does not know what the correct answer is, and can resort to various strategies in order to supply an answer that will satisfy the questioner. Aldridge & Wood observe that in their video recordings, "the child most frequently gives the last option as the reply", commenting "This is a very serious finding because clearly it is likely that the child is recalling the last bit of the question rather than necessarily answering with the truth" (1998:137). Astoundingly, they overlook a compelling piece of evidence in support of this, namely the failure of the children in two of the examples they cite to switch between second-person and first-person pronouns:

I = Interviewer (a female police officer) C = Child

From an interview with a 4-year old boy:

I: Is that older than you or younger than you?
C: Younger than you.

(Aldridge & Wood 1998:137)

From an interview with a 5-year old girl:

I: On your clothes or under your clothes?
C: Under your clothes.

(ibid.)

These two children's answers are manifestly echolalic, repeating the last part of the question in each instance. One is strongly reminded of Kanner's description of Elaine, case no. 11 in his original study:

> "Her reaction to questions - after several repetitions - was an echolalia type reproduction of the whole question or, if it was too lengthy, of the end portion."
>
> (Kanner [1943]1973a:31)

Fay (1980) argues that immediate echolalia is usually due to lack of full comprehension - which may very well be the case here with Aldridge & Wood's young subjects. However, Fay also claims that in normally developing children echolalia typically exhibits "mitigation" of deictic terms, and yet in these examples there is *no* such mitigation. These children, at ages 4 and 5, are much older than those in the previous two examples, yet there is no suggestion that they are autistic or developmentally delayed in any way. One might speculate that they have been traumatised by years of abuse, and/or by the temporary stress of the interview situation. However, the authors are using these examples to illustrate general issues of child interviewing techniques: the implication is that *any* young child could give echolalic answers if subjected to this kind of 'leading' questioning. I would suggest - although Aldridge and Wood themselves do not - that any young child could likewise exhibit failure to adapt their pronouns in an echolalic utterance.

One study of a pronoun-reverser's speech will be discussed in detail later in this chapter; for now, these examples should suffice to illustrate that it is by no means only autistic children who experience difficulties with their pronouns: the phenomenon of 'reversal' appears to be quite

widespread in normally-developing children. Moreover, adult caregivers seem to know (albeit unconsciously) that pronouns are problematic for young children, and adapt or avoid them to mitigate their difficulty. It is to the question of child-directed pronoun usage that I next turn. A brief introduction to the literature on modified input is appropriate here.

4.2 Parental pronoun modification: chicken or egg?

In all of the literature reviewed so far in this and the preceding two chapters, scarcely any mention has been made of the way in which adult carers use pronouns in addressing children, whether autistic or normally-developing. The exceptions are Boezewinkel (1995), discussed below, and Jordan (1998:115), who briefly acknowledges parental use of proper names or 'mummy/daddy' in place of pronouns. This is a glaring omission which requires redress. Could children's difficulties with pronouns arise from a failure on the part of adults to provide them with appropriate models of correct usage? This section will examine the question of 'input' in detail.

4.2.1 The emergence of the motherese hypothesis

Chomsky (1965) is now famous for, among other things, making "rather extreme and unsubstantiated claims" (Sokolov & Snow 1994:39) that the speech heard by young children was deformed and degenerate, and therefore an inadequate base on which to build language acquisition unless children were endowed with innate knowledge of Universal Grammar. Attempts to refute these claims led to an explosion in research, both on the language produced by young children and on the language directed at them. Early results showed that far from exhibiting complexity, syntactic errors, false starts and hesitations as Chomsky had claimed, 'Baby Talk' (BT) - speech to young children - was typically clear, grammatical and semantically and syntactically simpler than speech to adults.

Perhaps some projects were too enthusiastic in their zeal to 'bend the stick'[7] in the opposite direction from the Nativists: Pine (1994) observes how early ripostes to Chomsky led to an overemphasis on the alleged "facilitative" effects of Child-Directed Speech (CDS). Innatists (such as Wexler & Culicover 1980) responded to the emerging evidence by arguing that this, too, was indirect evidence

for a Language Acquisition Device: if maternal speech was really that simple then it would lead the child to generate over-simplistic hypotheses about the language it was learning, which could only be undone by explicit negative feedback of the kind which parents apparently tend not to provide (Brown & Hanlon 1970). In any case, the continuing influence of nativist ideas ensured that reports of work on 'motherese'[8], while copious in quantity over the last three decades, have not always received due attention or respect: Snow, in her introduction to Gallaway and Richards' collection on "input and interaction", lays much blame at Chomsky's door[9] for the fact that questions about input have long been treated as marginal to the supposedly central question of "what goes on inside children's heads".

Notwithstanding its difficult birth, the study of CDS continues to flourish, along with research on child language. There is now a generally accepted list of the features of CDS/'motherese', which were enumerated by the contributors to Snow and Ferguson (ed.s) (1977) and largely endorsed by the contributors to its intended sequel, Gallaway and Richards (1994).

> "Child-directed speech (CDS) tends to consist of short, well-formed utterances, to contain fewer false starts or hesitations, and to include fewer complex sentences and subordinate clauses. It is characteristically higher in pitch, more exaggerated in intonation, and slower in tempo than speech among adults. It is also highly redundant, as reflected in the incidence of part or whole repetitions, much more closely tied to the immediate context, and employs a number of special discourse features which serve to involve the child in interaction and to clarify and upgrade the child's own contributions."
>
> (Pine 1994:15, references omitted)

There are also some peripheral candidates for inclusion which are more controversial, such as phonological simplification and increased use of rising pitch (see Cruttenden 1994:137-140). The general picture, however, is clear: speech between adults may well be deformed and degenerate, but speech directed at young children is very different. Some (e.g. Levelt 1975; Moerk 1976, 1983; Cross 1977) have gone so far as to claim that by using CDS mothers are giving their children "language lessons". Such strong views are now generally discredited, for several reasons. Firstly, they "serve only to replace a very strong claim about the child with a very strong claim about the mother, and could be argued to entail an even more radical form of nativism than that proposed by Chomsky" (Pine 1994:16); secondly, it is disputed whether CDS is really adapted to teaching syntax and whether it is syntactically "fine-tuned" to the child's level of development (ibid.); and

thirdly, as Brown points out, "If BT is an effort to provide language lessons, it is certainly employed with some very unpromising pupils. By some reports, these include pet animals and household plants." (Brown 1977:12)

It seems more plausible that some aspects of CDS are primarily intended to improve communication with the child while others are used to express affection towards it. Ferguson (1977) classified the features of BT into three kinds of processes: 'simplifying', 'clarifying' and 'expressive and identifying'.

4.2.2 Sources of CDS features

It is clear that CDS is derived from the adult language, usually by processes of reduction, simplification and reduplication which some authors have attempted to catalogue (see, for instance, the contributions to Snow & Ferguson 1977 by Wills, Ferguson, and Bynon). In many cases these processes are identical to those evident in children's speech. For instance, Cruttenden's overview (1994: 136-7) of Baby Talk Phonetics (BTPh) lists the following ways in which "child phonology and BTPh show similar changes both within and across different languages":

1. Consonantal substitutions.
2. Simplification of consonant clusters.
3. Consonant harmony across an intervening vowel.
4. Simplification of syllable structure to CV.
5. Preference in English child language and BT for trochaic rhythm.

There is also evidence that BT shares its higher pitch with talk by babies (Sachs 1977; Garnica, 1977), and that a number of syntactic and semantic features are also held in common (Snow 1977). Cruttenden offers a reason for the strong degree of overlap:

> "Adults name a dog as /gɒgɪ/ because this sort of sequence is familiar in children's babbling; they are showing solidarity with children by speaking like them and at the same time showing them that a child sequence can have a meaning."
>
> (Cruttenden 1994:143)

4.2.3 Semantic and Pragmatic aspects of CDS

As one would expect if the primary purpose of CDS is to communicate, its simplifications extend beyond syntax, phonology and prosody to encompass semantic and pragmatic aspects of the language. For instance, Anglin's (1977) study of mothers naming pictures for their two-year-old children found that they were remarkably consistent in choosing the name which had most salience or utility from the child's point of view, regardless of its position in the taxonomic hierarchy: for instance they said 'flower' not 'carnation' and 'dog' not 'collie', but 'ant', not 'insect'. Their naming of the same pictures for adults was often different: 'carnation' rather than 'flower'. Brown (1977) argues that the differences in naming reflected the differences in "basic object level" (Rosch et al. 1976) between adults and children. However, the fact that children's ability to sort correctly is superior to their ability to name correctly the objects they are sorting (Rosch and Mervis 1977), leads Brown to a strongly anti-Whorfian conclusion:

> "the children cannot have needed the names to support their sorting. They were putting together two animals, for instance, almost all the time, when they almost never supplied the word *animal*. ... it now appears that children form their categories or classes at the basic object level on the basis of appearances and uses and not, primarily, upon the basis of names. The concept is then there beforehand, waiting for the word to come along that names it. There is semantic priority."
>
> (Brown 1977: 19)

It seems, then, that adults have some notion of what the young child is capable of understanding, both in general terms and in terms of an individual child's development, and modify the semantic content of their speech accordingly; but their modifications do not prevent children from forming concepts for entities which have not yet been named for them.

4.2.4 Pronouns in Child-Directed Speech

The issues raised above, such as "semantic priority", are extremely important for any discussion of pronouns in children's speech and in CDS. Although not explicitly mentioned in Pine's list, one of the generally acknowledged 'special discourse features' of CDS is the avoidance of pronouns. Brown (1977:2) included "the use of proper names or kin terms in place of pronouns" in a catalogue of features which he regarded as so transparent that, without any need for experimental controls, they could "surely be tested against the investigator's intuition and reliably judged to be peculiar to the BT register."

A number of questions spring immediately to mind. Is it true that adults avoid pronouns in their speech to young children? Which pronouns are affected, and what are they replaced with? If adults do indeed avoid them, is it because they intuitively feel that children find them difficult? Or does an individual parent receive speech from his/her child which indicates that this particular child is still at the pre-pronoun stage? Jordan certainly believes the latter to be the case for carers of autistic children, though she does not offer any evidence for this assertion:

> "Faced with such apparent difficulties with deictic pronouns, adults resort to the use of proper names to aid comprehension and this provides a workable strategy for the child with autism, who only seeks to identify people as individuals rather than as conversational partners."
>
> (Jordan 1998:138)

We may also enquire whether there are differences between languages in CDS pronoun usage or avoidance. Presumably the cognitive problems associated with concepts of deixis are universal, but there may in addition be language-specific complications due, for example, to the wide number of variants (due to gender and case inflections, politeness conventions etc.) which pronouns exhibit in many languages as compared with nouns.

Perhaps most importantly from a practical point of view, linguists may wish to know whether the withholding of pronoun input by adults eases or hinders the child's acquisition of the concept of deixis in general, or the use of specific pronouns in particular. The quotation from Jordan above implies that in the case of a child with autism, pronoun avoidance in CDS may lead to a vicious

circle, in which the child is perfectly happy with the adult's substitution of unambiguous labels and has no desire to challenge it. Oshima-Takane & Benaroya (1989) claim that the only way to get autistic children to use deictic pronouns correctly is by explicit teaching. How, then, does the normal child make the transition to the 'speaker principle' *without* any tuition? Or perhaps children do *not* have any initial difficulty with such concepts and in fact acquire them before the pronouns which may articulate them: a kind of 'pragmatic priority' analogous to the "semantic priority" claimed by Brown (see 4.2.3).

4.2.4.1 A study of BT Pronouns: Wills

Wills (1977) provides the first, and to this author's knowledge the only, systematic account of pronouns in 'Baby Talk' (CDS). She observes that "most BT pronouns are conventional pronouns used grammatically but deviantly in regard to participant role, number, or gender" (p. 273), and proceeds to classify the deviations by means of eleven rules which derive BT forms from adult-adult usage. These rules are summarised in Figure 4.2, along with some of Wills' examples recorded from the five parent-child dyads in her study. I have used italics to highlight the element in question in each case; a ∅ denotes a deletion. The categories are listed in descending order of frequency.

Key to symbols in Figure 4.2:

Roles: S = Speaker (i.e. a parent) R = Receiver (i.e. child)

Other symbols: F= Father M = Mother C = Child

-> 'is designated by'

3P 3rd person pronoun/NP[10] ∅ no surface manifestation

1. S -> 3P
   M: Oh, you gonna pound **mama** on the top of the head?
   F: This my shoes? See **daddy's** shoes?

2. S -> 'we'/'us'
   F: Okay, ***we***'ll turn that up a little bit
   and see if that comes in better.

3. S -> ∅
   M: **∅** Gonna get you.

4. R -> 3P
   M: Did ***Adam*** eat it? It's in **Adam's** tummy.

5a. R -> ∅
   F: No, **∅** can't do it.
5b. R -> 'you' in imperative
   F: **You** stay there a minute.

6. R -> 'we'/'us'
   F: ***We*** sure are tired, aren't ***we***?

7a. 'it' -> ∅
   M: **∅** Fell down. [a hat]
   F: **∅ ∅** Too big, **∅** won't fit.[11]
7b. article -> ∅)
   M: **∅** Dog's got your purse.

8. Personal pronoun -> Impersonal (article, quantifier etc.)
   M: Où est ***le*** papa?
   M: Now, ***one more*** arm in this sleeve.

9. Impersonal -> Personal
   F: Okay, plant, **you** just stay right there.

10. Role Substitution
   M: All gone, ***mommy***.

11. Ungrammatical Case Forms
11a. your -> you
   M: Wanna brush ***you*** hair?
11b. Nominative -> objective
   M: Yeah, ***her*** tired, dad. [the child]

Figure 4.2 Eleven categories of Baby Talk Reference Terms (adapted from Wills 1977).

The cumulative effect of these modifications is "a system which, as a whole, is strikingly different from adult talk" (Wills 1977:276). "Of the basic pronouns, only *they* is used consistently in its adult-adult sense." (ibid.)

Second-person (Receiver) pronouns are often replaced by the child's name ('Adam' in the type 4 example), but first-person (Sender) pronouns tend to be replaced with the parent's role ('mama', 'daddy's' in type 1). Wills comments: "One obvious reason for this operation in BT is the structural nature of the parent-child relationship. Referring to one-self by one's kin term stresses this relationship, and undoubtedly also helps to teach the child the proper kin term." (p.278) Wills notes that, while the Sender category is often elaborated in BT as compared with adult-adult speech, the Receiver category is even more elaborated, which is consistent with the child being the centre of attention. R can be realized by the child's name, a noun phrase or a third-person pronoun, and Wills also considers most depersonalisations (type 8) to be a subset of the R-> 3P category as well, since the majority of examples of this type consist of the replacement of 'your' with a non-possessive 3P pronoun or article: 'You wrinkle that nose, can't you?' (p. 286). Such 3P realizations of R might be thought to create confusion in situations where someone else is present besides the parent and child: is the child being talked *to* or merely talked *about*? However, as Wills points out, the roles of 'Receiver' and 'Other' are blurred for a young child who has not yet acquired the conventions for turn-taking, and the attested occurrence of BT features in speech between *adults* when a child is present indicates that the parents themselves may intend to make both roles available to the child (p.281).

It becomes apparent that Brown's (1977:2) allusion to "the use of proper names or kin terms in place of pronouns" is not nearly precise enough, not only because he fails to specify which pronouns are replaced by proper names and which by kin terms, but because these are by no means the only peculiarities in BT pronoun usage (though according to Wills they are among the most frequent ones). Another feature worth noting is the use of 'we'. Wills observes that "the BT pronoun *we* is the most ambiguous of all with regard to its exact referent" (p.279). Sometimes 'we' can be interpreted in context as a genuine 1st-person plural pronoun, including both parent and child (and possibly others); but at other times it is used to denote either the child alone (type 6) or the parent alone (type 2). Wills comments that the use of S-> *we* erases not only the individuality of the parent but also that of the child, since it makes the child a supposed participant in events over which he/she has no real control. The use of R-> *we /let's* often constitutes a kind of softened imperative: "the child, though he still gets ordered around much more often than any adult, is not always ordered in a customary ordering fashion." (Wills p. 285)

Boezewinkel (1995) also discusses this phenomenon with reference to Dutch, citing Coopmans who apparently believes that the following parental utterances would be helpful to the child in establishing that 'we' referred to more than one person:

(1) we gaan nu in bad
(we're going to have a bath now)

(2) we zullen eens je tandjes poetsen
(we'll just clean your toothies)[12]

(Coopmans, personal communication to Boezewinkel, in Boezewinkel 1995:25; my translation)

In (1) above the 'we' refers to the child (Wills' type 6); in (2) it denotes the parent (type 2). Boezewinkel vigorously contests Coopmans' suggestion that such parental usages help establish the plurality of 'we': on the contrary, she says, it causes confusion when the child tries to relate it to "normal daily communication".

On other occasions pronouns can be deleted altogether. Wills observes that in her study R-> ∅ (type 5a) was typically used in play, like most of the BT pronoun features, but was also used to comfort children after an accident: perhaps the absence of any direct reference to the child was intended to distance him or her from the traumatic event! The deletion of 'it' or perhaps a noun phrase also occurred (type 7a), but less frequently.

Personification (type 9) and Role Substitution (type 10) occurred less frequently in Wills' data, and she regards them as related since in the case of role substitution the Sender personifies the thing in question him- or herself using a normal Sender pronoun instead of a 3P or 2P one:

> "Role substitution is treated here primarily because it is an extension of personification (which clearly does involve unusual pronominal usages) in which ordinary pronoun usage but abnormal Sender category membership occurs. Role substitution may occur in BT because children fit into an ambiguous participant category, particularly if they do not talk very well. The majority of cases of role substitution observed occurred on behalf of the child." (p. 287)

The ungrammatical case forms (type 11) are different from Wills' other 10 categories because they are felt by native adult speakers to be syntactically ill-formed. Wills suggests that they are also produced more self-consciously, and that "they are not the result of rule-applications and do not derive from a systematic communicative class of behaviour, i.e. the pronoun-participant system" (p. 288). In any case they occur only rarely.

4.2.4.2 Other aspects of CDS Pronouns

Wills' data was obtained from five children, one of whom was learning French as well as English. Her analysis appears to give an exhaustive account of all the pronoun usages encountered which could be attributed to BT. I would like to offer an additional BT pronoun feature which Wills does not mention, no doubt because there is no possibility of its occurrence in standard English and while it might occur in French her limited French data has no example of it. This is the use of the *V* form of the second-person pronoun by an adult to a child.

Both the power semantic and the solidarity semantic dictate the use of *T* to a child, at least when the child is known to the speaker (see Chapter 1). However, I have encountered anecdotal evidence from a number of languages of adults addressing babies with the *V* form. I have personally witnessed a Panjabi-speaking father habitually addressing his baby as *tussī* (see 1.1.3), and a native speaker of Basque informs me of a similar practice in that language. It is also normal in Brazilian Portuguese (Coulthard, personal communication).

Asking adult speakers of languages like Basque or Portuguese why they address their babies with the *V* form typically yields a response like "it's because we regard babies as being very special". It is clear that the affective aspect of BT is a significant one, so there is probably some basis in these introspective explanations. However, there may also be a didactic motive, albeit an unconscious one on the part of the parent. If children grow up only hearing the T form of the second-person pronoun in their language, they will not learn to use the V form correctly. There is an attested example of this occurring in Saunders (1982):

> "In a case known to this writer, a German-speaking Australian teenager visiting Germany asked a middle-aged man at the counter in a post-office: 'Hast du die neuen Briefmarken?' (*'Do you have the new stamps?'*) To her surprise and embarrassment, she was severely reprimanded for her impudence. ... School-age children in German-speaking countries address most adults who are not relatives with the formal *Sie* and until well into their teens receive the informal *du* back. To use *du* when *Sie* is called for is considered cheeky or insulting. But this unfortunate girl, accustomed as she was to speaking German at home in Australia only with her parents and family friends (and thus only using *du*), had forgotten that her question should have begun not with 'Hast *du* ...' but with 'Haben *Sie* ...'. "
>
> Saunders (1982:205)

However, this young woman's acquisition of German, like that of Saunders' own sons, took place in a quite atypical linguistic environment, i.e. without community support. I seriously doubt whether it is necessary for parents in more naturalistic environments to use the *V* form to their babies in order to help them acquire it. Young children could, after all, hear the *V* form being used to their parents and other relatives from older children in the family, or being used to strangers by adult family members. My own daughter Jaswinder, whose exposure to Panjabi was quite limited, had by the age of 5;10 not only acquired the *V* form 'tussī' but overgeneralised it, so that she used it to her five-year-old cousin. Even in the case of Saunders' own sons, whose only source of German was himself, he states:

> "However, from their stories, Thomas and Frank do know what *Sie* is and roughly how it is used, a knowledge which could probably be easily activated if in a German-speaking country to prevent giving offence to adults."
>
> (ibid.)

If the use of *V* to children were essential for timely acquisition, we would expect to find it in the CDS of all languages which have a *T/V* distinction: this appears not to be the case. A further complication is the fact that the *V* form is apparently used only to infants, and is supplanted by the normal *T* once the child reaches the toddler stage. The issue of 'fine-tuning' in CDS is a contentious one, and there is some evidence that in phonology, at least, parents stop simplifying their input with children over the age of two (Cruttenden 1994:138, 146-9). It is possible, therefore, that adults do use the *V* form to infants to help them acquire it. This would be consistent with Van der Geest's findings that young children imitate, rather than reciprocate, adult pronoun usage, provided one assumes that adults have some awareness of this tendency and modify their own usage to exploit it. Further research is clearly required on this interesting phenomenon.

4.2.4.3 Why should carers modify or avoid pronouns in CDS?

What are the origins of BT pronoun usage? It might well be expected to do more harm than good to the child's language acquisition. Take, for instance, the replacement of second person pronouns by third person forms:

> "The exclusion and objectification accomplished by usage of 3P are ordinarily a threat to people. Why then, are they allowed in BT? BT itself makes children special and privileged beings, and BT pronouns ... do more to confuse the roles and identities of parents and child than they do to distinguish them. Exclusion by means of 3P reference is an empty threat here.'
>
> (Wills 1977:282)

Wills attempts to answer her own forcefully-put questions, not very convincingly in my opinion:

> "As far as objectification is concerned, this is not necessarily undesirable, since the independence on the part of the child which is emphasized by this usage is essential to his maturation. Also, R-> 3P may help the child to learn his name (since this is the most numerous member of the category), or learn that he has a name."
>
> (ibid.)

Several studies have shown (see Clark and Clark 1977:328) that caregivers make frequent use of the child's name in addressing it, probably as a means of getting or maintaining the child's attention. It is unlikely that the replacement of second person pronouns is necessary in addition to this for the child to learn its own name. In any case, while the substituted element *is* often the child's name, it may also be a noun phrase or a third-person pronoun. Wills offers no account of how these might help the child.

There is another possible explanation: that parents avoid the use of both first-person and second-person pronouns, replacing both of these with a variety of items or even deleting them altogether, because they somehow know or believe that it is hard for young children to grasp the inverse relationship between the first and second persons. The following might constitute evidence in support of this theory:

1. Attested examples of children avoiding first- and second-pronouns themselves, either omitting them altogether or replacing them with other forms;

2. Attested examples of children confusing first-person with second-person pronouns;

3. Attested examples of children avoiding and/or confusing other deictic items, such as here/there, come/go.

4. Absence of such errors or confusion in older children or adults acquiring a second language.

Admittedly the occurrence of 'you' being inserted in imperatives which would normally omit them (type 5b, 'You stay there a minute') would appear to constitute a counter-example. However, Wills believes that "introduction of the independent pronoun is an emphatic device which operates less frequently than pronoun-deletion" (p.284). Likewise, "nullification in the 3P category [i.e. deletion of 'it' or a NP, type 7a] is much less common than in either S or R categories" (p. 285).

I shall now review the literature on L1 and L2 language acquisition with respect to each of the four types of evidence outlined above.

4.3 Evidence of children's difficulties with pronouns

4.3.1 Avoidance

We have already seen (4.2.2) that many features of BT/CDS have their origin in TB (Talk by Babies). However, while Brown (1977:10) claims that "Wills and others have shown that both BT and TB substitute proper names for pronouns in certain contexts", I cannot find any reference in Wills (1977) to such substitution by children. All the same there is plenty of evidence elsewhere, and my own findings on this will be discussed in Chapter 5. We may also note that omission of pronouns altogether is common in young children, as seen in the case of Evelyn discussed in 4.13 above.

4.3.2 Reversals: A case study of a pronoun-reversing child

In 4.1.3 I gave three examples of pronoun 'reversals' in normally-developing children. It may be helpful here to examine the language of such a child in detail.

Van der Geest (1977) presents a collection of pragmatic errors produced by his son Mark in acquiring Dutch as a first language. These are summarised in Figure 4.3. Mark's age at the time of the utterance (years;months) is given if available. A literal translation is given in round brackets; Mark's actual meaning in the context is appended in square brackets.

Van der Geest convincingly offers a unifying explanation for all the errors in Figure 4.3: Mark was unable to make the necessary transitions between the Speaker and Receiver participant roles. Thus, between the ages of 1;6 and 2;1 he imitated the intonation of an adult asking him 'Are you coming with me?' (1a), 'Is that a butterfly?' (1b) or 'Would you like some cheese?' (1c).

Type 2 errors, which were recorded around the age of 2;2, again involve a straightforward imitation of the appropriate adult utterance for the situation. The apparent lack of awareness that adjustments have to be made for speaker roles leads to the use of second-person pronouns (*T* form, as an adult would use to a child) in place of first-person ones, and vice-versa. Thus we find 'I must mend that, you can't' being used to mean 'You must mend that, I can't' (2c).

1. Use of question intonation in inappropriate situations:

1a. In an imperative:

1;6 Mee?
('with?') ['come with me!']

1b. In a declarative:

Vlinder? [while looking at a picture]
('butterfly?') ['That's a butterfly.')

1c. In a request:

2;1 Kaas hebben?
('have some cheese?') ['can I have some cheese?']

2. Pronoun reversals:

2a. 2;2 Jij doet dat
('You do that') ['I do that']

2b. 2;2 Is dat van jou?
('Is that yours?') ['Is that mine?']

2c. 2;2 Ik moet dat maken, jij kan dat niet.
('I must mend that, you can't.') ['you ... I ...']

2d. 2;2 Is dit jouw melk?
('Is this your milk?') ['Is this my milk?']

3. Incorrect modality, manifested lexically:

3a. Information instead of permission question:

Doe ik dat even?
('Am I just doing that?') ['Can I just do that?']

3b. Tag instead of permission question:

Ik ga even kijken, hè?
('I'm just having a look, aren't I?') ['Can I ..?']

3c. Necessity instead of desiderative:

Ik moet zitten!
('I have to sit down!') ['I want to sit down!']

3d. Assertion instead of desiderative:

Ik krijg niks meer!
('I don't get anything more!') ['I don't want ...']

3e. Imperative instead of promise or assertion:

Goed vasthouden!
('Hold on tight!') ['I'll hold on tight!']

4. Speaker role reversal:

2;6 Dank je wel *('Thank you')* ['Here you are.']

5. Other reference errors: [see text for discussion]

5a. Ik ben daar, in de slaapkamer. *('I'm there, in the bedroom')*

5b. Heeft het buurmeisje vanavond opgepast?
('Did the girl next door babysit this evening?')

5c. 2;9 M: Mark, hou je goed vast aan de leuning en kom naar beneden!
('Mark, hold on tight to the banister and come downstairs!')
C: Ik hou me goed vast aan de leuning en kom naar boven!
('I'm holding on tight to the banister and coming upstairs!')

Figure 4.3 Systematic errors made by Mark acquiring Dutch (adapted from Van der Geest 1977).

4.3.3 Other deictic errors

Unfortunately Van der Geest does not tell us Mark's age when he made type 3 errors, except to say that they occurred "at a later age" than type 1 intonation errors. I have inferred that they also appeared after type 2 pronoun errors, and have ordered them accordingly in Figure 4.3. Type 3 errors involved Mark correctly substituting first-person for second-person pronouns, but without making the necessary adjustments in modality to adult utterances like 'Will you just do that?' (3a), 'Are you going to have a look?' (3b), 'You have to sit down' (3c) and 'You don't get anything more' (3d). In the case of 3e the adult model was an imperative which did not contain a pronoun at all, so Mark reproduced it unmodified.

Type 4 errors involve formulaic fixed expressions which are nonetheless role-specific. In Dutch 'alsjeblieft' (*T* form) or 'alstublieft' (*V* form), which literally means 'if you please', is used to mean 'here you are' when giving something to the addressee, who is expected to reply 'dank je/u wel' *('thank you')*.

> "During a short period when Mark was 30 months old, he interchanged the two expressions systematically. This interchange again suggests that Mark disregarded the communicative roles. Mark used *dank je wel* when offering something to an adult, who said *dank je wel* to him after acceptance. This expression was for Mark just an empty phrase accompanying a transfer in any direction in which he was involved." (Van der Geest 1977:97)

Type 5 errors are similar, but a little more subtle. Here the errors are not concerned directly with speaker role but with deictic items such as 'here'/'there', which derive their meaning in context from the position of the speaker and hearer. In 5a Mark says 'I am there, in the bedroom', which is unacceptable in adult speech because 'here' is always required when one is referring to one's own position. Of course an adult addressing Mark would use 'daar' *('there')* and this is undoubtedly the source of the error. Similarly, in 5b Mark asks 'Did the girl next door babysit this evening?'. An adult speaker would have used 'gisteravond' *('yesterday evening')*, not 'vanavond' *('this evening')*, but at the time Mark was told about his babysitter the event was still in the future and so 'vanavond' was used by the adult. Mark reproduced it literally the following day.[13]

Pronouns and adverbs are not the only parts of speech which involve deixis: the verbs 'come' and 'go' also take part of their meaning from the relative positions of speaker and hearer. In 5c Mark's mother was on the ground floor, his father was on the second floor and Mark was on the first floor. Mark's mother instructed him 'Mark, hold on tight to the banisters and come downstairs' but a rebellious Mark wanted to go up to his father instead. He expressed this by echoing his mother's words: 'I'm holding on tight to the banisters and coming *up*stairs'. Because he was moving away from the addressee he should have said 'ik ... **ga** naar boven' *('I'm **going** upstairs')*, but although he replaced his mother's 'je' with 'ik' and 'beneden' with 'boven' his knowledge of deixis was not yet at the level of sophistication which would have told him to replace 'komen' with 'gaan'.

If van der Geest's analysis is correct, and can be generalised to all pronoun-reversing children, then the pronouns are only one symptom of a more general difficulty with deixis. In that case they are not so different from older children with autism. Bartolucci and Albers, who found that the autistic children in their study exhibited difficulties with deictic tense markers, argued that:

> " ... the problem shown by autistic persons in mastering pronouns is only the most obvious aspect of a more general problem, namely, the development of deictic syntactic categories."
>
> (Bartolucci & Albers 1974:133)

This may well prove to be the case with normally-developing pronoun-reversers such as Mark, too.

4.3.4 Deixis problems in L2 acquisition

It seems from the above that children do indeed have problems with the reciprocal relationship between 'I' and 'you', 'here' and 'there', and other deictic expressions, suggesting that the problem is a cognitive not a linguistic one. If this is the case, we should expect older children and adults acquiring a second language to have no such problems with deictic expressions, since the relevant skills are transferable from their L1 and do not have to be re-acquired. It follows that we would not expect adults addressing L2 learners to avoid pronouns when addressing them.

I have been unable to locate any references in the literature to pragmatic errors by L2 learners which match any of the types in Figure 4.3. There have, however, been a number of studies of the French

'interlanguage' of children in Canadian immersion programs, who learn a substantial part of their school curriculum through their L2 (Wesche 1994:235). Studies of the classroom variety of French used in such programs reveal that one of its features is a reduced range of functions: 'tu' and 'vous' are used only to mark the difference between singular and plural, not the relative status of speaker and addressee (Selinker et al. 1975; Lapkin 1984; Lyster 1990; Vignola and Wesche 1991; Harley 1992). I would argue that this apparent difficulty with the social functions of *T/V* pronouns is only to be expected given that, almost without exception, the students' L1 is English, which does not have distinct *T* and *V* forms. It would be interesting to see whether students whose L1 does have a *T/V* distinction produce similar effects in their French interlanguage: one would expect not.

As regards modified input to L2 learners, Wesche provides a useful overview of the literature. She considers that, following Ferguson's (1971) initial use of the term "Foreigner Talk" (FT), various researchers (notably Arthur et al. 1980; Long 1983) have established a distinction between "Foreigner Talk" (ungrammatical and frequently patronising) and "Foreigner Discourse" (FD), generally grammatical and facilitative). She describes the attested features of FD in some detail, and assesses its value as a teaching mode in comparison with both unmodified and interlanguage discourse. She concludes that FD is dynamic and flexible, involving interactional as well as linguistic modifications on the part of native speakers. Though apparently intended to enhance comprehension and communication, it is also beneficial for L2 acquisition.

Interestingly, Wesche reports that the use of "full noun phrases or proper names instead of pronouns" is one of the features attributed to FD (p.227). She comments:

> "Such modifications could ease processing demands on learners through a reduced set of more familiar forms, and more explicit forms resulting in clearer referents"
>
> (ibid.)

This is not what one would expect if pronoun avoidance has its roots in the developing cognitive abilities of young children: why should it also benefit adults who have progressed beyond this stage? These are intriguing findings which deserve further research.

4.4 Summary

On balance, it seems likely that the features of BT pronoun usage described by Wills (1977) are best explained by problems with deixis in general for young children due to cognitive factors. The use of *V* forms to babies, however, (see 4.2.4.2) would seem to require an explanation of a different order.

We have seen that there is room for considerable disagreement about the order of acquisition, especially for Dutch, and even more disagreement about possible explanations for the observed phenomena. There seems to be a reasonable amount of consensus, at least for English, that normally-developing children generally use 1st and 2nd person correctly by the time their MLU has reached 2.5 and/or they have a biological age of around 2;4. It is also commonly held that pronoun 'reversals' between 1st and 2nd person are rare, in both English and Dutch. However, it is noticeable that no serious attempt has been made to examine the pronoun usage of children below the threshold ages or MLUs given above, so any conclusions about the absence of 'reversals' would seem to be premature.

Moreover, it should be noted that most of the studies discussed above draw their conclusions from observation of their subjects' *production* of pronouns, with the honourable exceptions of Jordan (1998) and Charney (1980). The fact that both these researchers found dramatic discrepancies between receptive and productive competence serve as a salutory warning not to assume that productive data tell the whole story.

Several cases have been reviewed in which normally-developing children appear to 'reverse' their 1st and 2nd person pronouns. On closer inspection, however, it appears likely that the pronouns are merely the most salient symptom of a more general difficulty with deixis and the complexities of turn-taking and speaker role alternation.

In order to test this theory properly it is necessary to undertake a systematic investigation of children's pronoun usage involving a substantial quantity of empirical data. This will be the focus of the next chapter.

Notes

1. Namely, with reference to Longobardi (1994). In Boezewinkel 1995:6, footnote 1.

2. Jordan acknowledges that "differences in the methods of collecting the samples of utterances may well account for any differences found" (Jordan 1998:133-134), but does not question the measure used to quantify pronoun usage.

3. Boezewinkel supplements her corpus data with diary entries made by Van Kampen (the children's mother), so the ages given here are not necessarily reproducible from the Van Kampen corpus in the CHILDES database (van Kampen 1994).

4. There is no difference in pronunciation between 'jou' and 'jouw', so to a pre-literate child these forms would be identical.

5. To be fair to Boezewinkel, she does concede on p. 95 that the empirical evidence proves Rispoli wrong on this point. However, her alternative is to postulate that children are influenced by phonological rather than syntactic patterns: at no point does she consider that frequency of exposure could be a factor.

6. I have rendered 'toel' as 'tair' here to try to capture the consonant cluster simplification made by Sarah.

7. The metaphor of 'bending the stick' comes from Lenin. According to Higgins, 1997 (appendix 2), "It derives from a speech by Lenin at the Second Congress of the RSDLP: 'The Economists bent the staff towards one side. In order to straighten it out again, it had to be bent towards the other side and that is what I did'."

8. The terms 'Baby Talk' (BT), 'motherese', 'parentese', 'caretaker language' and 'child-directed speech' have all been used to denote a special register used by adults to address babies and/or young children. While 'Baby Talk' tends to be a more specific label, relating mainly to infants and emphasising the 'affective' elements of the register, the other terms often appear to be interchangeable.

9. She reports that in Chomsky's 1986 keynote address to the Boston University Child Language Conference, he characterised all child language research as falling into one of three categories: wrong, trivial, and absurd.

10. Wills (1977:277) actually says that 3P is used "for any third person pronoun", but 3P clearly also relates to noun phrases like 'mama' and 'Adam' in categories 1 and 4 respectively.

11. This example involves the deletion of the copula as well as the subject 'it', but Wills does not comment on this.

12. The diminutive ending '-je' is a productive morpheme even in adult Dutch, so it is difficult to decide whether 'tandjes' should be translated with English babytalk 'toothie' or not.

13. This is my interpretation of van der Geest's less than lucid explanation (p.99) that the utterance in question was "spoken by Mark the morning after the day he was told that the girl next door would take care of him that evening. In this case he overlooked that *this* of *this evening* refers to the day in which [the utterance] is produced."

CHAPTER 5: A CORPUS-BASED INVESTIGATION OF CHILDREN'S AND PARENTS' USE OF PRONOUNS

> "Ze zeggen maar jij en papa of Johan - dat kan me niet schelen, maar tegen anderen moeten ze leren u te zeggen."
>
> *("They just say 'jij' and 'Dad' or 'Johan' - that doesn't bother me, but they have to learn to say 'u' to other people."*)
>
> Johan Cruijff, footballer, in Libelle 14th June 1974
> Quoted in Davidse 1998:43

5.1 Introduction

According to Jordan (1998), "the evidence is that pronoun reversals are rare in normally developing children". Jordan cites Charney (1980), Chiat (1981) and Shipley & Shipley (1969) in support, while acknowledging Clark (1977) as "one of the few researchers who report significant incidences of 'reversals' in normally developing children" (Jordan 1998:94). However, we have noted in the previous chapter that pronoun-reversing children seem to turn up in the literature with surprising regularity - although they are not always explicitly acknowledged as such - and so Jordan's claim would appear to be questionable.

Studies of normally-developing children's pronoun usage have relied on data from one or two children each, the classic example being Brown's (1973) Adam, Eve and Sarah. Experimental studies of autistic children's pronouns typically used control groups matched with the autistic groups for MLU, vocabulary score or verbal mental age. While the normally developing controls will tend to be somewhat younger than the autistic group, then, they are unlikely to be as young as 2, yet this is the age at which some normally developing children are known to produce pronoun 'reversals': see the examples from Owen and Halliday in section 4.1.3, and from van der Geest in section 4.3.2.

I therefore believe that existing studies are not sufficient to justify the claim that few normally-developing children produce pronoun 'reversals'. Moreover, in addition to stating that 'reversals' are rare, Jordan asserts that the use of 3rd person pronouns in place of 1st person forms, which can be found in autistic speech, "has no direct parallel in normal development" (Jordan 1998:117). This, too, is questionable and requires empirical investigation.

Finally, investigations of the acquisition of plural pronouns 'we/us' and 'they/them' are almost entirely absent from the literature. Jordan does test autistic children's comprehension of 'them' in her Experiment 4, finding no significant difference from her control group.

An empirical study is called for in order to obtain a picture of the prevalence of pronoun 'reversals' and other 'errors' in normally-developing children. Such a study needs to be based on a reasonable number of children in order to yield reliable data with patterns of usage which are potentially significant in statistical terms. It also needs to include an examination of the language of the caregivers, since as we have seen in Chapter 4 (section 4.2) it has become part of received linguistic wisdom that one of the features of 'motherese/CDS' is pronoun avoidance, and yet very little empirical evidence for this has ever been adduced, the notable exception being Wills (1977), whose subjects consisted of 5 parent-child dyads.

It is my hypothesis that there are aspects of pronoun use in child language which cannot be learnt from adults, because adults do not use them; and conversely, that there are aspects of pronoun use in CDS which cannot be attributed to child language, because children do not use them. To investigate these issues I will make use of data from the CHILDES corpus of child language, concentrating on the acquisition of all personal pronouns in English and Dutch. The decision to use Dutch as well as English sub-corpora was motivated by the belief that a cross-linguistic comparison may help to resolve some important theoretical questions. Proponents of the Maturation hypothesis (see 4.1.1) argue that it is impossible for children to use pronouns until they have a proper grasp of the concepts of number (Hyams and Hoekstra 1994) and case (Radford 1990). If this is so then the use and misuse of pronouns should follow similar patterns in all languages, or at least in languages like English and Dutch where the number and case systems are broadly similar (neither language has a dual, for instance, or a distinct ablative inflection). If, on the other hand, pronominal errors are linguistic rather than conceptual in origin, we would expect to find some differences between languages: overgeneralisations on phonological grounds could account for the over-use in English, alleged by Rispoli (1993), of 'me/my/mine' forms at the expense of 'I', while overgeneralisation on syntactic grounds (the nominative being the default case) could conversely explain the over-use of 'ik/ikke' in Dutch at the expense of the 'm-' forms, as claimed by Kaper (1976).

While inevitably some qualitative information is lost by using a large corpus which one has not personally transcribed, this was for me outweighed by the benefits: the availability of a much greater quantity of child language data than I could possibly hope to acquire personally within the limitations of a doctoral research project, and thereby the possibility of obtaining statistically significant results. Much hitherto-published research on child language has been remarkably low on quantity:

> "Because child language data are so time-consuming to collect and to process, many researchers may actually avoid using empirical data to test their theoretical predictions. Or they may try to find one or two sentences that illustrate their ideas, without considering the extent to which their predictions are important for the whole of the child's language. In some cases, conclusions about individual differences in child language have been based on analysis of as few as two children, and rarely on groups larger than 25. Because statistical tests based on three or four subjects have very little power, researchers often avoid the use of statistics altogether in corpora-based studies."
>
> (MacWhinney 1995:280).

MacWhinney is no doubt thinking here of studies such as Brown (1973), in which the three subjects 'Adam', 'Eve' and 'Sarah' were studied diachronically. The transcripts (which incidentally are now included in the CHILDES corpus) formed the basis for drawing up the canonical order of acquisition of English morphemes and function words which has now entered the 'received wisdom' of child language research and indeed appears to be all-pervasive in the literature (e.g. Clark & Clark 1977:345). While making a major contribution to the field in their time, such canons must be at least questionable when their empirical basis is so minimal. In the case of Brown's list of morphemes I found that my own daughter Jaswinder most certainly did not conform to the canonical order (Blackwell 1992): this may have been because she was bilingual, but it is unsafe to draw this conclusion when there is insufficient information about what is truly typical for an English monolingual child: 'Adam', 'Eve' and 'Sarah' may have been unrepresentative (indeed Brown describes Eve as "linguistically precocious").

In the same way, Boezewinkel (1995:31) vividly demonstrates the limitations of the corpus used by Powers (1994). Of the five children acquiring Dutch in this study, Laura was only recorded up to age 2;2, younger than the beginning ages of the rest, and was also a late starter, so her speech is not comparable with that of the others. Niek was also a "slow starter" on Powers' own admission; Hein and Thomas were both "disfluent children" and Kate was bilingual. The validity of any

conclusions drawn from the language of such atypical subjects has to be highly questionable. Even if children are not atypical, there is considerable variation between individuals: Boezewinkel (1995:91) observes that both the Dutch children in her study, Sarah and Laura, overgeneralised the accusative form of the 1st person singular pronoun whereas Tim, studied by his father Coopmans[1], overgeneralised the nominative. With too few children to obtain a representative sample, the idiosyncrasies of one child may be wrongly assumed to be typical or even universal. It is also possible with 'fast learners' like Sarah that whole stages will evade capture by the sampling at 2- or 3-week intervals which is typical of CLD studies (Boezewinkel 1995:100).

It was the intention of this thesis, then, to obtain material of sufficient quality and quantity to yield empirical data which could be claimed to be both representative and reliable.

5.2 The CHILDES Corpus

Whereas early investigations into child language were conducted by the notebook-and-pencil method, the classic case being Leopold's diaries (Leopold 1939, 1947, 1949a, 1949b), the advent of the audio tape recorder in the 1950s fuelled an explosion of data which provided the background for the discoveries and controversies of the 1960s which have been described in Chapter 4. One negative side-effect of this explosion was that the raw data could no longer be included in its entirety in the researchers' publications (MacWhinney 2000a:2-3). The need arose for a way of making child language databases available to the academic community at large.

The idea behind CHILDES originated at the *Max-Planck Institut für Psycholinguistik* in Nijmegen, the Netherlands, in 1981: the founding mothers and fathers were Dan Slobin, Willem Levelt, Susan Ervin-Tripp and Brian MacWhinney. The idea bore fruit in 1984 when the MacArthur Foundation awarded a two-year grant to Carnegie Mellon University for the establishment of a corpus, with Brian MacWhinney and Catherine Snow as Principal Investigators (MacWhinney and Snow 1990). The purpose of the project was "to facilitate the sharing of transcript data, increase the reliability of transcriptions, and automate the process of data analysis" (MacWhinney 1995:viii). The resulting CHILDES system consists of three interdependent elements: the database itself, the **CHI**ld **L**anguage **D**ata **E**xchange **S**ystem; the CHAT transcription conventions (**C**odes for the **H**uman

Analysis of **T**ranscripts); and the CLAN package of analysis programs (**C**omputerized **L**anguage **AN**alysis)(MacWhinney 1995, 2000a, 2000b).

The CHAT system is extremely flexible, offering transcribers the options of inputting their data in the UNIBET phonological encoding (with or without prosodic marking) or in standard IPA characters. Moreover, audio or video clips can be linked in so that users can click on a sentence and hear the original recording of it. CHAT provides conventions for *coding* at various levels as well as *transcription*: for instance it provides the facility for detailed coding of errors, or of the timings of speech and pauses. Those contributing data to the corpus are required to conform to the minimum standards of the CHAT format, and to provide documentation files with background information (MacWhinney 2000a:19-20).

The CLAN software, distributed free of charge for Macintosh, DOS/Windows and Unix platforms, provides a suite of programs facilitating every imaginable level of linguistic analysis of data in CHAT format.

5.3 Methodology

5.3.1 Software and Corpora

The first step in this part of my research was to download the relevant parts of the CHILDES corpus from the website at Carnegie-Mellon University (http://childes.psy.cmu.edu) to the University of Birmingham's Sun7 (later Sun19) mainframe computer. Initially all the English and Dutch corpora were downloaded, 'unzipped' and extracted from the 'tar' file. Next, the CLAN software suite was downloaded, 'unzipped' and 'tarred' onto the Sun7. The programs are written in C or C++ and had to be installed using the Gnu 'gcc' compiler under the Unix operating system.[2]

5.3.2 Selection of corpora

5.3.2.1 Non-language impaired subjects

The next step was to select appropriate data for analysis. It was decided to examine English and Dutch diachronic data, these being the only languages in which I had sufficient competence to

undertake linguistic research; they also happened to be the two best-represented languages in the CHILDES database at the time of the study. The CHILDES handbook (MacWhinney 2000b) was consulted for its description of the various corpora, and non-British English data were excluded from the study since I felt that my native-speaker intuitions were more valid for data from my own variety of English. This immediately eliminated many possible corpora, such as that of Bates (Bates et al. 1988) which was obtained from children in Boulder, Colorado. Likewise, Belgian (Flemish) corpora were excluded from the Dutch sample because my competence in Dutch applies to the standard variety used in the Netherlands and I might have some difficulty in interpreting Flemish varieties, which typically use some different pronouns (for instance 'gij' and 'ge' in place of 'jij' and 'je').

It was imperative that the files be available in CHAT format so that analysis could be performed automatically by means of the CLAN suite of programs. Somewhat surprisingly, not all the corpora in CHILDES are in CHAT format, and I discarded those which were not, such as Cornell (Hayes and Ahrens 1988). Other corpora, such as Bernstein-Ratner (Bernstein-Ratner 1987), represented the children's utterances in 'Unibet' format (CHILDES standardised phonological transcription) and were likewise rendered ineligible. Historic corpora which had originally been transcribed by paper-and-pencil were excluded, such as Haggerty (Haggerty 1929); as were the numerous corpora which consisted of data from only one or two subjects, e.g. Cruttenden (Cruttenden 1978).

Next, the handbook and on-line documentation were consulted for information on the ages of the subjects; additionally the CLAN command 'kwal +o@AGE -t* +u' was run over all the remaining English and Dutch files to obtain the ages of the children from the '@Age' header in each file. In view of van der Geest's (1977) finding that his son Mark 'reversed' 1st and 2nd person pronouns in Dutch at age 2;2 (see 4.3.2), and the evidence (discussed in 4.1.3) that Owen's daughter Evelyn did the same in English, also at age 2;2, I considered it imperative to examine the pronoun usage of children at this age and younger. Indeed the claim of Radford (1990) that children are incapable of pronoun usage before the age of 2;0 has been fairly comprehensively refuted by the counter-evidence of Hyams (1992) (see 4.1.1) and Clahsen (1990) (see 4.1.1.4). Boezewinkel (1995) used a range of 1;9 to 4;0, arguing that past research has often missed interesting phenomena by using too early a cut-off point. Ideally, therefore, I wished to obtain data from children even younger than

2 years, and follow their progress over several months. This ruled out the use of many of the corpora in the CHILDES collection. Usually the children were too old, as in the Fletcher corpus for English (Fletcher and Garman 1988) and the Utrecht corpus for Dutch (Elbers and Wijnen 1992); but in a few cases the children were too young, such as the Howe corpus of Scottish children (Howe 1981) which contained no recordings over the age of 2;1. I wanted to obtain diachronic evidence of individual children's developing pronoun usage, which led me to discard corpora like Conti-Ramsden 1[3] (Conti-Ramsden and Dykins 1991) which provided a synchronic 'snapshot' of several children's language on a particular date.

It was found that not all corpora actually contained child utterances: in the Korman corpus, for instance, the children were only aged up to 16 months and their utterances had not been transcribed since the purpose of this study (Korman 1984) was to investigate CDS. Conversely, because I wished to examine the pronoun usage of caregivers as well as children, it was essential to obtain files where the speech of caregivers - preferably parents - was represented. This ruled out Braine (Braine 1976)[4] where only the childrens' speech was transcribed. Although I wanted transcripts of parent-child interaction, I considered that the use of multi-party discourse could introduce confounding variables: if two children were present and their father used 'you', it could be unclear which of the children he was addressing and therefore whether the children were responding appropriately. The 'kwal +o@PARTICIPANTS -t* +u' command was used to extract the '@PARTICIPANTS' header from each file. The information thus obtained led me to rule out the Wells (Bristol) corpus, which up to then had been the front-runner for inclusion, being a diachronic corpus of British "normative data" collected in the 1970s to complement previous American studies (Wells 1981:3). The subjects included in the CHILDES database comprise half of the younger group in the Bristol study, namely 32 British English urban children who were recorded at 3-monthly intervals between the ages of approximately 1;6 and 3;6, with one final recording as each child commenced school at around 5;0. This seemed ideal for my purposes; unfortunately, my run of 'KWAL' yielded information such as the following for the subject Abigail:

From file abigai04.cha:
@Participants: ABI Abigail Target_Child, MOT Mother, REB Rebecca Sister, FAT Father, NEI Adult, NIC Nicole Sister, FRE Family_Friend, UNK Unidentified, PIA Visitor.

Such diversity of interlocutors is doubtless attributable to the method of data-collection employed: the subjects were fitted with radio microphones which picked up all speech by the child and any speech by others within his/her earshot. This collection method was chosen deliberately, in order to obtain data which were

> "truly representative - both of the full range of social background and of the many kinds of spontaneously occurring conversation that make up children's experience of language in use in the years before they go to school."
>
> (Wells 1981:4)

The signal picked up in this way was transmitted to a timing device which recorded 90-second samples at 20-minute intervals (Wells 1981:6). This methodology certainly harvested spontaneous speech, but it also ensured that plenty of background noise was picked up, that complete interactions were seldom recorded, and that there was no control over the number or type of interlocutors encountered by the child. Reluctantly I abandoned the Wells corpus.

This left only one English corpus in the running, the relatively recent Manchester collection (Theakston et al. 2001). This is a longitudinal study of 6 British boys and 6 British girls between the ages of approximately 2 and 3 years. The subjects were all first-borns, from monolingual English families, with their mothers as primary care-givers. They were mostly from middle-class backgrounds and were recruited through newspaper advertisements and local nurseries. Subjects were audio-taped in their homes on two separate occasions in every 3-week period for a year. For the first half hour they played with their own toys and for the second 30-minute period they used toys provided by the experimenter.

Although the resulting data is not entirely dyadic, the experimenters tried to stay in the background as much as possible, so that their verbal contributions are minimal. In some files there are appearances by occasional siblings, grandparents, other relatives or visitors, but these too are negligible. In all files the mother is present and is the child's main interlocutor; fathers never appear. All the experimenters are female. I decided that most possible confounding variables had been controlled for and that the remaining interference was within tolerable limits.

One of the purposes of the Manchester study was to investigate possible correlations between maternal input and the children's acquisition of particular items: therefore maternal and other adult

speech is fully and carefully transcribed, along with the child utterances, in conformance with the CHAT conventions. An additional advantage of the Manchester corpus is that it includes morphological and error coding, including codes for pronominal errors such as 'carry you' when the child wants to be carried. There are also codes for imitation and self-repetition. The contributors add a note of warning that errors may have been missed and advise the user:

> "Anyone wishing to work on particular error types should carry out a detailed analysis of the child's use of a particular system (e.g., pronoun case marking) rather than relying on pulling out errors by searching for the [*] error marker."
>
> (CHILDES manual, MacWhinney (2000b)).

However, pronoun case marking is a matter of syntax which can be assessed relatively impartially from studying the linguistic context of the particular usage. The kind of pronoun errors I was looking for involved pragmatic information from the *non*-linguistic context. Considering that I had not been present during the capture of the data, and that no video recordings were available, I tended to rely on the judgements of the transcription team as expressed in their choice of coding.

Appendix 5.1 lists all the English corpora of non-impaired children which I considered, with brief reasons for rejecting most of them.

With the Dutch data there was much less choice: the Utrecht corpus provides a good range of diachronic data from children living in the Netherlands (as opposed to Belgium where two of the corpora were collected), but unfortunately none of the children was sampled at an age below 2;3 and I was therefore obliged to reject it. One viable corpus was that of van Kampen (van Kampen 1994), which regrettably only includes data from two children (her own). The pronoun usage represented in these data has been exhaustively studied by Boezewinkel (1995) (see 4.1.1.3), and this will be a useful point of comparison with the database I eventually selected, the Groningen corpus (Bol 1996). This contains speech from 6 boys and one girl between ages 1;5 and 3;7, talking in an unstructured home setting with a parent and an investigator. This, I considered, would be comparable with the Manchester corpus of English child language.

Appendix 5.2 lists all the Dutch corpora considered, with brief reasons for rejecting most of them.

5.3.2.2 Language-impaired Subjects

Although there are several corpora in the CHILDES database containing data from children and adults with various types of aphasia and specific language impairment, the only two to include autistic subjects are the Flusberg and Rollins corpora (Tager-Flusberg et al. 1990; Rollins 1999). Flusberg is a longitudinal study of 6 autistic subjects, which also contains comparison data from 6 Down Syndrome (DS) children who were matched on age and MLU at the start of the study. (The cognitive and linguistic characteristics of DS have been enumerated in section 3.5.3, q.v.) The data appear to have been collected in the USA (the researchers were based at the University of Massachusetts at Boston). I felt that the disadvantage of using non-British data was outweighed by the advantage of having diachronic samples from children between the ages of 3 and 9 years, with a minimum of 6 recording sessions per child. Tager-Flusberg et al point out the limitations of previous studies of autistic children which have relied on a "cross-sectional" design:

> "Autistic children's productive language abilities have been assessed using relatively small language samples collected in a single session. These studies, therefore, do not provide any information about developmental patterns of language acquisition in children with autism nor how their language might change over time. Furthermore, many of these studies have collected language samples from autistic children interacting with teachers or researchers in a laboratory or school environment. In contrast, current psycholinguistic research on normally developing children typically relies on language samples collected in the home, with the children interacting with their mothers. Children, including autistic children ... are more verbal and use more advanced language with someone they know well in a familiar setting."
>
> (Tager-Flusberg et al. 1990:2).

The purpose of including the DS controls was to ensure "that any differences in developmental patterns in the autistic children could not simply be attributed to later onset" (ibid:3).

All the autistic subjects were male, which is to be expected given the much higher occurrence of autism in boys (see 2.1.1, footnote 1, and 2.3.2). They had all been diagnosed as autistic (DSM-III criteria, see 3.2) prior to the age of 30 months, and can thus be classed as having EIA rather than AS; nonetheless four of them had IQ scores above 90 and could be regarded as high-functioning. The DS subjects comprised 4 boys and 2 girls who were matched with the EIA subjects on age and MLU (but not, of course, on IQ which was significantly lower because of the inherent nature of DS).

All subjects were video- and audio-recorded by two researchers in the subjects' own homes, interacting with their mothers and playing with toys and games selected by the mother. The researchers kept their verbal participation to a minimum apart from presenting the child with a small gift in each session in an attempt to introduce an element of standardization. Only speech by the mothers and children was transcribed; other speech was recorded as "context". The findings of Tager-Flusberg et al. (1990) have already been reviewed in 3.5.3.

The Rollins corpus (Rollins 1999) consists of transcribed videotape data from 5 boys, each interacting with a clinician at the pre-school programme for children on the autistic spectrum at the University of Texas at Dallas. The corpus was designed to describe pragmatic skills in autistic children up to the 1-word stage: the emphasis is thus on accurate speech-act coding rather than syntactic or morphological codes. There were no normal, DS or any other controls. For my purposes, therefore, this corpus offered inferior data to the Flusberg corpus in every respect: number of subjects, control group, type of interlocutor and number of recordings per child. Nor did it offer gender balance or British data, both of which the Flusberg corpus also lacks. I decided to use the autistic and DS data from the Flusberg corpus and discard the Rollins sample.

Ideally it would be preferable to have non-impaired controls from the same study to ensure that every effort had been made to eliminate confounding variables; unfortunately there is currently no corpus in CHILDES containing autistic children with non-impaired controls (there are two corpora, those of Rondal (1995) and Hooshyar (1985, 1987) which contain data from Down Syndrome children and their normal controls).[5]

Finally, it would have been good to have some data from autistic Dutch children to compare with the normally-developing subjects in the Groningen corpus. At present, however, the only component of the CHILDES database involving Dutch children with language disabilities is the Bol-Kuiken corpus (Bol & Kuiken 1990), whose subjects are 20 Dutch children diagnosed with Specific Language Impairment (SLI), not autism.

My potential 'second-hand subjects', then, were the 12 children of the Manchester corpus acquiring British English normally; the 7 children of the Groningen corpus acquiring Netherlands Dutch

normally; the 6 American English autistic boys of the Flusberg corpus and their 6 male and female matched DS counterparts. I shall henceforth use the abbreviations M, G and F to indicate these three corpora respectively, and FA and FD to indicate the Autistic and DS sub-groups within the Flusberg corpus.

A final selection was made of four subjects in each group, with four consecutive files for each subject. Since all the FA subjects were male, it was decided to restrict the analysis to boys in order to exclude sex as a possible confounding variable. There were only four boys in the FD sample, so these were selected along with their paired FA counterparts. Four boys were then taken from each of the Manchester and Groningen corpora, and four files were selected for each boy. In the case of the Manchester and Groningen corpora, the files were matched as closely as possible for biological age: samples were used at ages approximately 1;11, 2;1, 2;3 and 2;5. The boys in the Flusberg corpora were of course much older, but their MLU scores compared surprisingly closely with those of the toddlers in the corpora for normal children. It must be borne in mind that "utterance length is clearly determined by factors beyond the domain of language such as memory capacity and the child's ability to efficiently encode and convey complex information" (Theakston et al. 2001:129). Nonetheless it is universally used by researchers in child language as a convenient measure of linguistic development in young children.

In the case of the Flusberg corpora, consecutive files were used starting from the earliest available, unless there was a problem with a particular file such as little or no speech being available from the mother. The final selection of subjects and files is shown in Tables 5.1 - 5.4. The MLU figures for all subjects, as calculated by the CLAN 'MLU' command, are given here for information, and presented in graph form in Figures 5.1 - 5.4 below; but of course it cannot be assumed that MLUs for English are directly comparable with those for Dutch; and the MLU figures for autistic children need to be taken with a generous helping of salt given the propensity of children with EIA to regurgitate entire sentences. For these reasons no attempt was made to apply statistical tests to the MLU scores across samples since the results would have been meaningless.

Child's name	Files (all have suffix .cha)	Age	M.L.U.
Aran	aran01a, aran01b	1;11.12	1.256
	aran07a, aran07b	2;1.21	2.14
	aran13a, aran13b	2;3.15	2.591
	aran19a, aran19b	2;5.17	2.902
Dominic	domin03a, domin03b	1;11.17	1.264
	domin09a, domin09b	2;1.19	1.608
	domin14a, domin14b	2;3.14	1.943
	domin21a, domin21b	2;5.22	1.996
Joel	joel02a, joel02b	1;11.11	1.186
	joel08a, joel08b	2;1.10	1.753
	joel14a, joel14b	2;3.11	1.918
	joel20a, joel20b	2;5.13	2.425
Warren	warr05a, warr05b	1;11.26	2.091
	warr10a, warr10b	2;1.14	2.494
	warr17a, warr17b	2;3.25	2.87
	warr21a,warr21b	2;5.13	3.281

Table 5.1 Final selection of subjects from the Manchester corpus.

Child's name	Files (all have suffix .cha)	Age	M.L.U.
Abel	abe11112	1;11.12	1.299
	abe20116	2;1.16	1.663
	abe20323	2;3.23	2.006
	abe20527	2;5.27	1.968
Daan	daa11121	1;11.21	1.286
	daa20121	2;1.21	1.479
	daa20304	2;3.4	1.713
	daa20511	2;5.11	2.286

Matthijs	mat11110	1;11.10	1.438
	mat20121	2;1.21	1.477
	mat20319	2;3.19	1.613
	mat20526	2;5.26	2.264
Peter	pet11110	1;11.10	1.701
	pet20113	2;1.13	2.018
	pet20321	2;3.21	2.816
	pet20515	2;5.15	3.485

Table 5.2 Final selection of subjects from the Groningen corpus.

Child's name	**Files (all have suffix .cha)**	**Age**[6]	**M.L.U.**
Jack	jack02	7;1	2.731
	jack03	7;5	1.967
	jack04	7;9	2.424
	jack06	8;5	2.138
Mark	mark01	7;7	1.315
	mark02	7;11	1.486
	mark03	8;3	1.359
	mark04	8;7	1.486
Rick	rick01	4;7	1.494
	rick02	4;11	1.346
	rick03	5;3	1.345
	rick04	5;7	2.199
Stuart	stuart01	3;4	1.253
	stuart02	3;8	1.253
	stuart03	4;0	1.508
	stuart04	4;4	1.615

Table 5.3 Final selection of subjects from the Flusberg Autistic corpus.

Child's name	Files (all have suffix .cha)	Age	M.L.U.
Billy	billy01	5;9	1.55
	billy02	6;1	1.37
	billy03	6;5	1.446
	billy05	7;1	1.753
Charles	charles01	3;3	1.231
	charles02	3;7	1.198
	charles03	3;11	1.489
	charles04	4;3	1.343
Jerry	jerry01	6;9	2.629
	jerry02	7;1	2.655
	jerry03	7;5	2.372
	jerry04	7;9	2.549
Martin	martin01	5;4	1.332
	martin02	5;8	1.371
	martin03	6;0	1.625
	martin04	6;4	1.799

Table 5.4 Final selection of subjects from the Flusberg Down Syndrome corpus.

5.3.3 Procedure

Listing possible pronoun forms for automatic retrieval was a non-trivial task:

> "If a word is spelled in an indeterminate number of variant ways, researchers who attempt to analyze the occurrence of that word will inevitably end up with inaccurate results. For example, if a researcher wants to trace the use of the pronoun 'you', it might be necessary to search not only for 'you', 'ya' and 'yah', but also for all the assimilations of the pronouns with verbs such as 'didya/dicha/didcha' or 'couldya/couldcha/coucha'."
>
> (MacWhinney 2000a:40)

MacWhinney here is urging his contributors either to use standardised spellings or to document non-standard forms thoroughly. Fortunately the corpora I used had fairly consistent spellings.

Boezewinkel (1995) extracted a wordlist from her data files (the van Kampen corpus) and examined the context of everything that looked like a possible pronoun in order to establish an exhaustive list. This process revealed a plethora of idiosyncratic child forms, such as Laura's 'iekke' and 'ikje' for 1st person singular as well as the standard 'ik' and well-known 'kindertaal' form 'ikke'. Sarah, meanwhile, produced 'mijnt' for 1st person possessive 'mijn' (Boezewinkel 1995:40-41). At first sight this revelation is extremely worrying; further scrutiny, however, revealed that all the above items were cases of *hapax legomena* and most of the other idiosyncratic forms were also of low frequency. The question of whether accuracy should be sacrificed to the higher god of automation is a well-known dilemma in corpus linguistics. I decided to settle for a compromise: to establish as many actual pronominal forms as reasonably possible prior to automatic analysis, and then not to worry unduly about those that might have been missed, on the grounds that they would not be present in significant numbers.

Firstly, then, like Boezewinkel, I obtained a wordlist for each subject. Boezewinkel does not say how she obtained hers; I used the CLAN program 'FREQ'. All words used by all speakers were output in alphabetical order and the resulting list was searched manually for possible pronouns. Any idiosyncratic ones found - such as Dominic's 'mine-mine' (M) and Daan's 'mije' (G) - were added to the 'eprounouns' file in the case of English words (Appendix 5.3) or the 'dpronouns' file for their Dutch counterparts (Appendix 5.4).

There were also pronouns embedded in longer strings, the most extreme example of which occurs in the speech of one of the DS subjects in F: 'wearetheworldwearethechildren', the title of a song by Michael Jackson which the child has apparently memorised and regurgitated whole. The DS subjects produce a total of 8 occurrences of the shorter 'wearetheworld' and the autistic subjects 6, along with a number of rote phrases such as 'wishyouamerryChristmas' and 'blessyou'. It would not be a difficult task to extract all such forms from the wordlists and add them to the 'epronouns' file so that they could be counted as pronoun forms. However, I decided against this on the basis that the transcribers had made a deliberate decision to encode these strings as a single word, on the evidence of each child's productive linguistic ability at the time of each recording. I would not presume to question their judgement without having access to the original tapes.

Like Boezewinkel (1995:40) I inspected the source files in detail and corrected any errors found, such as adult utterances being wrongly attributed to the child by the transcribers.

One of the things I was looking for was use of proper names or relation terms where adult-to-adult discourse would use a pronoun. I will henceforth dub these forms 'pronoun substitutes' for want of a better term. Fortunately, the CHAT conventions dictate the use of initial capital letters for all proper names (Macwhinney 2000a:17), and this also applies to relationship terms like 'Mummy'. Unfortunately, the Groningen transcribers had not always been consistent with their capitalisation, whereas their Manchester counterparts had been exemplary.

The 'COMBO' concordance program was run over the selected CHAT files to obtain all pronouns or substitute forms used by either the child or the caregiver in each case. COMBO was instructed, firstly, to look in the 'epronouns' or 'dpronouns' file for a list of terms to be matched: these files included wildcards, e.g. 'your*' in the 'epronouns' file ensured matches with 'your', 'yours' and 'yourself', while 'ik*' in the 'dpronouns' file would match 'ik', 'ikke' and idiosyncratic forms such as 'ikje'. COMBO was also instructed to pull out all words with initial capitals, since these would mostly be proper names.

I had, as described above, taken reasonable steps to find all non-standard pronoun forms from wordlists. However, as a final safeguard against the possibility of having missed some non-standard spellings, I added a search term to look for items coded as pronouns, proper names or 'possessive determiners' ('my', 'her' etc.) on the '%mor' morphological coding tier. This could only be used with the Manchester corpus, since the Groningen and Flusberg corpora did not contain morphological coding.

All of this necessitated a somewhat complicated Boolean search expression which took the form, for the English data, of:

```
combo +o%+t*CHI
+s'@epronouns.warren+(%mor:^*^pro*)+(%mor:^*^det:poss*)+(%mor:^*^n:prop*)'
+t'%mor' +u warr21?.cha
 >warr21_pron.CHI
```

This can be roughly translated as 'include the % coding tiers in the output; restrict the analysis to speaker *CHI; find all matches of words listed in the 'epronouns.warren' file, and also all cases of words tagged as pronouns, possessive determiners or proper names on the %mor coding tier; merge the input files ‘warr21a’ and ‘warr21b’; and print out to a file all matching lines with their line numbers'.

For the Dutch data, where no morphological coding was available, the equivalent COMBO command was somewhat simpler:

combo +o% +t*CHI +s'@dpronouns.peter' pet20515.cha >pet20515_pron.CHI

and a typical run of COMBO for a Flusberg file would look similar: the following example extracts pronouns from the speech of the mother in the file 'martin04.cha'.

combo +o% +t*MOT +s'@epronouns.martin' martin04.cha > martin04_pron.MOT

Where morphological coding tiers were not present in the input files, the list of pronouns and proper names in the 'epronouns' file had to be exhaustive. This necessitated repeated revisions to the file and passes over the data, particularly for the Dutch files where the transcribers had not consistently followed the CHAT requirement to use word-initial capitals for proper names.

The CLAN software suite includes programs which generate statistical summaries of the output from other programs such as COMBO; however, the use of such automation was guaranteed to produce errors. Not everything output by the COMBO commands described above would, in fact, be a pronoun or pronoun 'substitute', and other cases would be ambiguous and would need to be assigned manually to the appropriate person, number, gender and case category. For example, 'zijn' in Dutch could be either a 3rd person singular masculine possessive pronoun or a form of the verb 'to be', and all the verb forms had to be eliminated by examining the context of each occurrence. 'Zij', on the other hand, would always be a pronoun (assuming that parent-child discourse is unlikely to contain subjunctives[7], which are almost as obsolete in Dutch as they are in English); but could still be either 3rd person singular feminine nominative or 3rd person plural nominative. Consequently the

COMBO output files were analysed manually and the resulting figures for each pronoun were compiled into tables. Immediate repetitions of the same word or phrase were only counted once.

5.3.4 Objectives of the corpus research

5.3.4.1 Research Questions

I hoped to throw light on the following questions:

(1) in what order do children typically acquire personal pronouns?
(2) what 'errors' (from an adult perspective) do children make with their pronouns, e.g. 1st/2nd person 'reversals', use of proper name or 3rd person pronouns for 1st person?
(3) what differences in pronoun acquisition and pronominal errors, if any, exist between children acquiring English and children acquiring Dutch?
(4) what differences in pronoun acquisition and pronominal errors, if any, exist between normally developing children, autistic children and children with DS?
(5) is there any correlation between the pronoun usage of caregivers and the pronoun usage of the children in their care?

I hoped too, in a more general way, to be able to form a view as to what factors might account for children's pronominal errors. Boezewinkel (1995) discusses at some length Rispoli's (1993) claims that children's errors with English pronouns can be explained, on the one hand, by phonological over-generalisation, and on the other hand by "saliency" which is constituted both by the range of syntactic positions which a pronoun can take, and by its susceptibility to cliticisation. The more positions a pronoun can appear in, the greater its saliency. Rispoli also claims that pronouns which have clitic variants are less salient than those which can only appear independently. Boezewinkel demolishes these claims quite effectively, pointing out that the phonological and syntactic criteria often point in opposite directions: for instance, the Dutch 1st person singular 'ik' can appear in three types of construction, rendering it syntactically "salient", whereas phonologically speaking it is the exception since all the other 1st-person singular forms begin with 'm-'. Similarly, clitic forms may in fact be as syntactically versatile - and thus "salient" - as their stressed/unreduced equivalents, or even more so. Boezewinkel further points out that identifying the 'm-' forms as the phonological

default paradigm does nothing to explain why the child should choose one 'm-' form, e.g. 'me', over another, e.g. 'mijne'. I would add a further criticism here to both Rispoli's and Boezewinkel's arguments: it may be perfectly true that a particular pronoun can appear in, say, three different constructions, but this will not be psychologically significant for the child if some of these constructions belong to such an elevated register that he/she never encounters them. One of Boezewinkel's examples in her schema for English 'my' (1995:12) is what she calls "specGerund", as in 'my going to the market is very rare': so, one could retort, is the use of the gerund in English, even between adults. One advantage of using a corpus is that the researcher can see which lexical items and constructions are really used by caregivers in addressing children, and thus form a realistic view of what is likely to be 'salient'.

5.3.4.2 Hypotheses

My main hypotheses were as follows:

(1) That normally-developing children around the age of 2 years would be found to make some pronoun 'reversals' and that the phenomenon was thus not unique to autistic children; nonetheless there would be other differences between the pronoun usage of autistic and non-autistic children;

(2) That there would be some differences between pronoun usage in children acquiring English and Dutch, and that these differences could not all be explained in terms of phonological properties, syntactic patterns or "salience";

(3) That in general, many of the patterns and differences found could be attributed to the frequency with which a child encountered a particular pronoun, and the context in which he/she encountered it;

(4) That parents and caregivers of autistic children would exhibit special features in their CDS pronouns which differed from the CDS pronouns of adults caring for normally-developing children.

I did not venture to form any specific hypotheses about the pronoun usage of DS children or the differences between them and autistic children in the level or type of pronoun 'errors'.

5.3.5 Method of Analysis

The possible forms available at each 'pronoun choice point' - i.e. a point where an adult would be expected to use either a proper name or a pronoun - were labelled as shown in table 5.5.

Code:	**Description:**	**English forms:**	**Dutch forms:**
1s/n	1st person singular, nominative	I	ik, ikke, 'k
1s/a	1st person singular, accusative	me	mij, me
1s/gd	1st person singular, genitive determinative	my	mijn, m'n
1s/gi	1st person singular, genitive independent[8]	mine	(de/het[9]) mijne(n[10]), van mij
1s/r	1st person singular, reflexive	myself	mij, me[11]
1s/e	1st person singular, emphatic	(I) myself	(ik)zelf
1p/n	1st person plural, nominative	we	wij, we
1p/a	1st person plural, accusative	us (incl. 'let's')	ons
1p/gd	1st person plural, genitive determinative	our	ons, onze
1p/gi	1st person plural, genitive independent	ours	(de/het) onze(n), van ons
1p/r	1st person plural, reflexive	ourselves	ons
1p/e	1st person plural, emphatic	(we) ourselves	(wij)zelf

Code:	Description:	English forms:	Dutch Informal:	Dutch, Formal:
2s/n	2nd person singular, nominative	you	jij, je (includes 'alsjeblieft')	
2s/a	2nd person singular, accusative	you (includes 'thank you', 'bless you')	jou, je (includes 'dank je wel')	
2s/gd	2nd person singular, genitive determinative	your	jouw, je	uw
2s/gi	2nd person singular, genitive independent	yours	(de/het) jouwe(n), van jou	(de/het) uwe(n), van u
2s/r	2nd person singular, reflexive	yourself	je	u, zich
2s/e	2nd person singular, emphatic	yourself	(jij)zelf[12], (je)zelf	(u)zelf
2p/n	2nd person plural, nominative	you	jullie, je	u
2p/a	2nd person plural, accusative	you	jullie, je	u
2p/gd	2nd person plural, genitive determinative	your	jullie, je	uw
2p/gi	2nd person plural, genitive independent	yours	-, van jullie	(de/het) uwe(n), van u
2p/r	2nd person plural, reflexive	yourselves	je	u, zich
2p/e	2nd person plural, emphatic	yourselves	(jullie)zelf, (je)zelf	(u)zelf

Code:	Description:	English forms:	Dutch forms:
3s/n	3rd person singular, nominative, non-gender-specific	they	die
3s/nm	3rd person singular, nominative, masculine	he	hij, ie
3s/nf	3rd person singular, nominative, feminine	she	zij, ze
3s/nn	3rd person singular, nominative, neuter	it	het, 't
3s/a	3rd person singular, accusative, non-gender-specific	them	die
3s/am	3rd person singular, accusative, masculine	him	hem, 'm
3s/af	3rd person singular, accusative, feminine	her	haar, 'r, d'r,ze
3s/an	3rd person singular, accusative, neuter	it (includes 'lookit' in US data)	het, 't
3s/gd	3rd person singular, genitive determinative non-gender-specific	their	- [13]
3s/gdm	3rd person singular, genitive determinative masculine	his	zijn, z'n
3s/gdf	3rd person singular, genitive determinative feminine	her	haar, d'r

Code:	Description:	English forms:	Dutch forms:
3s/gdn	3rd person singular, genitive determinative neuter	its	-1
3s/gi	3rd person singular, genitive independent, non-gender specific	theirs	-
3s/gim	3rd person singular, genitive independent, masculine	his	(de/het) zijne(n), van hem
3s/gif	3rd person singular, genitive independent, feminine	hers	(de/het) hare(n), van haar
3s/rm	3rd person singular, reflexive, masculine	himself	zich
3s/rf	3rd person singular, reflexive, feminine	herself	zich
3s/rn	3rd person singular, reflexive, neuter	itself	zich
3s/em	3rd person singular, emphatic, masculine	himself	(hij)zelf
3s/ef	3rd person singular, emphatic, feminine	herself	(zij)zelf
3s/en	3rd person singular, emphatic, neuter	itself	(het)zelf
3p/n	3rd person plural, nominative	they	zij, ze, die
3p/a	3rd person plural, accusative	them, 'em	ze, die, hen (hun)
3p/gd	3rd person plural, genitive determinative	their	hun

3p/gi	3rd person plural, genitive independent	theirs	(de/het) hunne(n), van hen (hun)
3p/r	3rd person plural, reflexive	themselves	zich
3p/e	3rd person plural, emphatic	themselves	(zij)zelf
PN	proper name, nominative, vocative or accusative	e.g. Sarah	e.g. Anna
PNg	proper name, genitive determinative or independent	e.g. Sarah's	e.g. Anna's, Anna d'r; Jans,[14] Jan z'n, van Jan
MISC	not any of the above categories, or ambiguous		
0	absence of pronoun		

Table 5.5 Coding of pronouns and proper nouns

Using these codes it is possible to generate a two-dimensional matrix to plot the expected forms against the actual ones encountered, as shown in table 5.6, with figures along and off the diagonal indicating 'canonical' and 'deviant' pronoun use respectively:

Target ▸ / Actual ▾	1s/n	1s/a	1s/gd	1s/gi	1s/r
1s/n	10				
1s/a	3	4			
1s/gd			5		
1s/gi				1	
1s/r					1

Table 5.6 Coding matrix for pronoun 'errors'

In this hypothetical example, the subject has used 'I' 10 times where expected, but has also used 'me' (1s/a) 3 times where 'I' (1s/n) would be expected. This is, of course, merely a fragment of the full matrix showing all possible forms.

For each child and each mother in the sample, for each file, a coding matrix was completed giving all pronouns and pronoun substitutes used, plotted against the expected form. 'Canonical' and 'deviant' forms were defined in terms of what one would expect an adult to use to another adult. To ensure consistency, a list of coding criteria was drawn up and adhered to: this is shown in Appendix 5.5. The child was always given the benefit of the doubt in uncertain cases. For instance, Aran (M/Aran01b) says 'Mummy hair' which might be assumed to be an attempt at 'Mummy's hair' with an omitted possessive morpheme. However, the mother glosses this as 'Mummy has hair' and so it is coded as 'canonical'.

The coding matrix is not entirely symmetrical, in the sense that while pronouns or proper names which were judged as entirely superfluous are coded with a target form of '0', *omitted* pronouns or proper names are *not* coded with an actual form of '0'. This was for two reasons: firstly, it is impossible to instruct a computer to search for something which is not present, unless it has been coded as such, so the search for omitted pronouns would have had to be conducted manually; and secondly, judgements about what, if anything, has been omitted are highly subjective. As MacWhinney (2000a:38) puts it, "The coding of word omissions is an extremely difficult and unreliable process. Many researchers will prefer not to even open up [sic] this particular can of worms." The author of this thesis decided to leave the can of worms firmly closed.

On each (electronic) coding form, the child's chronological age (if known) and MLU were recorded. MLU was calculated using the CLAN tool of that name, which is an attempt to implement the guidelines set out by Brown (1973). Brown considered compound and irregular forms as monomorphemic, and the MLU program accordingly defaults to ignoring the CHAT compounding symbol '+', thus treating 'Santa+Claus' as a single morpheme (MacWhinney 2000a:97). It is possible to override this setting but I chose not to, since I had noticed that the Manchester transcribers seem to have made liberal use of the '+' symbol whereas the Flusberg team employed it much more sparingly and the Groningen corpus contains no compounding mark-up at all. For example,

'Christmas+tree' appears repeatedly in M but is rendered as 'Christmastree' in F and the Dutch equivalent, 'kerstboom', appears in G (as one would expect, since Dutch standardly permits compounding of words as a single string of characters). To instruct MLU to treat 'Christmas+tree' as two morphemes would exaggerate the differences between the MLUs of children in the two English language corpora, representing the non-language-impaired M subjects as being more linguistically advanced than they really are in relation to the F subjects. Moreover it would exacerbate the already troublesome problem of comparing MLU scores in English and Dutch. It is true, of course, that autistic children tend to produce echolalic utterances in which an entire phrase or sentence is regurgitated whole (discussed in 2.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.3.2); however, I do not believe it was the intention of either the Flusberg or Manchester researchers to use the '+' compounding symbol to reflect their subjects' psychological representations of morphemic structure.

The coding forms were entered into Excel spreadsheet format and are presented as Appendix 5.6 on the CD accompanying this thesis. As well as a matrix for each child and each mother derived from each of the four files per subject, a matrix was generated which presented the totals for each child and each mother.

5.4 Findings: Child Pronoun Usage in the Childes Corpus

5.4.1 Introduction

All the children, and all the mothers, produced some 'deviant' pronouns as judged from the standpoint of how an adult would normally speak to another adult. The main findings are now presented.

5.4.2 Order of acquisition

Tables 5.7 to 5.10 list the pronouns which were deemed to be acquired by each child in the four corpora, in the order they first appeared in the four files analysed for each child. A pronoun was deemed to have been 'acquired' if the child had used it canonically three or more times in that particular file, and if the 'target' form had been produced correctly on 75% or more of the times it

was apparently intended[15]. This is similar to the criterion which Jordan (1988) adopted. The charts giving the totals for all four samples were also checked to see whether any pronouns could be deemed 'acquired' on the basis of the cumulative data although they had not met the threshold criteria in any single file. Any such pronouns are listed on the 'cumulative' line under the 'age' heading.

Pronouns are listed only for the *first* point at which the child met the criteria. Of course, the acquisition of a particular pronoun at a particular stage does not mean that the same child continued to demonstrate competence in that pronoun in all subsequent files analysed; indeed, the 'two steps forward, one step back' phenomenon is well documented in various aspects of child language acquisition, such as past tenses or passive verbs (Clark and Clark 1977:342-3). For instance Aran, (Manchester, table 5.7) having produced three instances of 'myself' (emphatic rather than reflexive) at both 2;1 and 2;3, without any errors, does not produce this form at all in the sample at age 2;5. Nonetheless, on the whole acquisition proceeded in an 'additive' rather than 'subtractive' manner: once a form had hit the threshold it continued to be used correctly by that child. It might not occur in such high frequencies in subsequent files, but it would not, once acquired, start being replaced by a 'wrong' alternative. This is true for the normally-developing children, at least: the situation for the autistic subjects will be discussed below.

5.4.2.1 Manchester

Age (approx)	Aran	Dominic	Joel	Warren
1;11	I, it(nom), PN	it (acc.), PN	it (acc), PN	he, it(nom), it(acc), PN
2;1	my, myself (emphatic)	I, yours	I, it (nom)	my, PNg
2;3	me, it(acc)	him, them	my	mine
2;5	you (nom), you (acc), he	me, my, mine, we, you(nom), you(acc), he, it(nom)	me, we, us, you(nom), you(acc), your, he, him, his(gd), they, them	I, they
cumulative	mine	your	-	me, them

Table 5.7 Order of acquisition of pronouns in the Manchester corpus

Some generalisations would appear to be valid here: all four boys are using people's names correctly at the first stage sampled, along with 'it', although Dominic and Joel only use 'it' in object position while Aran has only acquired it in subject position and Warren uses both. By the end of the period sampled, all the boys have acquired the 1st person singular nominative, accusative and genitive determinative pronouns, along with 3rd person masculine 'he'. Here, though, the similarities end. Aran, Joel and Warren acquire 1st person forms before 2nd person ones: Aran and Joel do not acquire any 2nd person pronouns before age 2;5 and Warren has not acquired any at all even by then although he has acquired 3rd person 'he', 'they' and 'them'. Dominic, by contrast, acquires both 1st and 2nd person forms at 2;1, 3rd person forms at 2;3, and a mixture of all three persons at 2;5.

These data would seem to offer counter-evidence to Boezewinkel's confident assertion that "Pronouns in the first person appear first in child language" (1995:7). Third person 'it' seems to be the favourite for all these children and one also acquired 'he' before any 1st person forms. Silberg's claim (1978) that 'my' and 'mine' come before 'I' is also on shaky ground: only Warren conforms to this prediction. The canonical picture of 1st, 2nd and 3rd person pronouns being acquired in that order (see 4.1.1.2), supported by most researchers including Jordan, is simply not sustained by my data.

5.4.2.2 Groningen

Age (approx)	Abel	Daan	Matthijs	Peter
1;11	PN	PN	PN	PN
2;1	ik, jij, hij[16]	-	-	hij
2;3	het (nom.)	ik, hij	die (nom.s.), hij	die (nom.s.), (hij)zelf
2;5	mij, jouw	wij, zij(3pl)	PNg	(ik)zelf, jou, zij(pl.)
cumulative	-	-	-	hem, het (acc.)

Table 5.8 Order of acquisition of pronouns in the Groningen corpus

While there is remarkable uniformity at the age of 1;11 across the Dutch subjects, after this they become even more diverse than their English counterparts. All the boys used proper nouns, but no pronouns, for people at age 1;11. At age 2;1 Abel acquired one pronoun for each of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd person nominative, while Daan and Matthijs did not show evidence of having acquired any new forms and Peter added only 3rd person 'hij' to his repertoire. By the end of the period surveyed, neither Matthijs nor Peter had demonstrated the accurate production of any 1st person form, though Peter did use the emphatic 'zelf' with reference to the 1st person. By contrast, by age 2;3 all four boys were using nominative masculine 'hij'. This appears remarkable, but can perhaps be explained by the fact that Dutch has some residual grammatical gender: words which have 'de' as their definite article, and can be described as having 'common' gender,[17] are mostly assigned masculine pronouns, with the exception of nouns for people which tend to be given 'natural' gender, and nouns for institutional entities which are increasingly coming to be treated as feminine. Thus, as well as hearing adults refer to them (the boys) as 'hij' for reasons of natural gender, they would have encountered the pronoun being used to refer to dozens of common nouns for reasons of grammatical gender. It is actually the English data which demand an explanation in this regard: how is it that all four of the Manchester subjects had acquired 3rd person 'he' by 2;5, while one of them, Warren, had not yet acquired any 2nd person pronouns whatsoever?

While all the English subjects had acquired 'I' by the end of the period studied, and none of them acquired 2nd person forms before any 1st person ones, this was not true of the Dutch subjects. Peter had 2nd person accusative 'jou' but no 1st person forms at all, while Matthijs had no 1st *or* 2nd person forms.

In general the Groningen children seemed to exhibit delay in their pronoun acquisition in comparison to the Manchester subjects, having acquired roughly half the number of pronouns. However, it has to be remembered that Dutch has many more forms than English does, having at least two variants (stressed and unstressed) for each person/number/case combination. These were added together for my purposes, which increased the chance that a child would be deemed to hit the threshold for acquiring some pronouns, but at the same time reduced the number of different items that were counted (if he had acquired both the stressed and unstressed forms they would be counted as one). More importantly, the sheer number of different forms needing to be learnt may

be a source of confusion to the young child acquiring Dutch as a first language and may account for the apparent delay. The relatively impoverished production does not necessarily reflect the child's capabilities for *comprehension* of the many forms, which of course could not be tested in a study which relied on naturally-occurring rather than experimentally-elicited data.

In passing, we may note that the 'polite' 2nd person 'u' forms did not occur once in this data, either from the children or - more surprisingly - their mothers, even in role play. The child form 'ikke' did occur a few times and the data throws some light on it. Firstly, the apparent paradox raised in 4.1.1.3 can be solved: it is not the case that children produce this form without ever hearing it from an adult. The mothers in this study produced 'ikke' on occasion:

(M= mother, C= child, R= researcher)

(Daan is reluctant to use his fingers with fingerpaints)
M: nou zit ie vast, nou kun je heel [!] mooi gaan tekenen.
(now it's fixed, now you can draw really nicely.)
M: ja? *(yes?)*
C: teke(nen). *(draw)*
M: huhuh.
C: teke(nen).
M: dus je vindt zo niet leuk, zo.
(so, you don't like it much like that.)
%act: painting long line with finger.
R: maar wij wel. *(but we do.)*
M: ikke wel. *(I do.)*

(G/Daan, daa20304).

Another finding was that the children produced other forms with an extra final vowel, such as 'ditte' in place of 'dit' (this):

(Matthijs is playing with marbles but asks the researcher Evelien for help)

C: Ien helpen. *(Ien help)*
C: Ien helpen # **ditte**. *(Ien help this)*
E: moet ik helpen? *(Do I have to help?)*
E: kun je wel pakken. *(You can get it)*

(G/Matthijs, mat20121)

'Ikke' may simply be more salient than 'ik' and as such easier to hear and to pronounce. Nonetheless the overwhelming majority of 1st person singular nominative forms produced by all the children were the standard 'ik' variant.

In the light of all this we can return to our discussion of the literature in 4.1.2.3. My data provide no support for Bol and Kuiken's (1986) claim that 1st, 2nd and 3rd person singular pronouns appear simultaneously: this holds true only for Abel, who has acquired one of each at 2;1. Nor is there evidence to substantiate Bol and Kuiken's assertion that singular forms in all three persons are followed by the 1st person plural 'wij' and finally the 2nd and 3rd person plurals. Daan and Peter both acquire 3rd person plural 'zij' before 'wij', and moreover simultaneously with or even before any 2nd person singular forms.

5.4.2.3 Flusberg autistic

Stage	Jack	Mark	Rick	Stuart
1	I, me, my, we, you(nom), you(acc), your, he, it(nom), it(acc), PN, PNg	I, me, you(nom)	I, it(acc), PN	PN
2	they	it(acc), PN	it(nom)	it(acc)
3	she	-	-	I, you(acc)
4	our	-	-	-
cumulative	-	it (nom)	my	-

Table 5.9 Order of acquisition of pronouns in the Flusberg autistic corpus

In the light of all the previous discussion of the problems with personal pronouns experienced by autistic children, the findings presented in Table 5.9 are nothing short of astonishing. Three of the children had already acquired 'I' at the beginning of the period observed, and the fourth had acquired it by the third recording. All but Rick had also acquired at least one 2nd person form by the end of the period, and Jack had acquired a good deal more. In general these patterns do not look very different from those of the Manchester children in the previous two sections: they tend to use proper nouns correctly before pronouns, and acquire 'it' in object position before subject position and before most other pronouns. Although on the whole fewer pronouns are demonstrated above the threshold level, there is considerable individual variation: Jack in particular compares very favourably with Aran and Warren in the Manchester group.

Of course some caveats are in order here. Firstly it must be remembered that these children are years older than their non-autistic counterparts, although their MLUs are similar. Normal children of their ages would be expected to have a much larger pronoun repertoire. What I am arguing is that, given their general language delay as evidenced by their MLU, these children do not seem on this evidence to have a particular problem with their pronouns.

Secondly, the principle stated in 5.4.2 that, once acquired, a pronoun continues to be used correctly, does not always apply to the autistic subjects. For instance Mark in file Mark01 produces 6 correct uses of 'I' and 4 of 'me' and no errors, thus hitting the threshold immediately for both these pronouns. However, in the next sample (Mark02) he produced no attempts at 'I' at all and 15 at 'me' of which 4 are erroneous, giving an error rate of 0.26 which is too high to qualify. Therefore if we had happened to start our sampling at this point, Mark would not have been recorded as having reached the threshold for either pronoun. In the third sample (Mark03) he resumes correct usage of 'I', but of his 9 attempts to reference the 1st person accusative only two are the correct form 'me', and in the fourth sample (Mark04) neither pronoun is attempted at all.

What conclusions are to be drawn from this concerning methodology? One could decide that a more frequent sampling rate was needed, or a larger number of samples, or a higher threshold for labelling a pronoun as 'acquired'. However, I suspect that even if all three of these were implemented we would still be left with a pattern which fluctuated wildly. Unlike the normally developing children in the M and G corpora, whose MLUs show a steady increase, the MLUs of the autistic children (and to a lesser extent the DS children) go down as well as up from sample to sample, as shown in Figures 5.1 to 5.4:

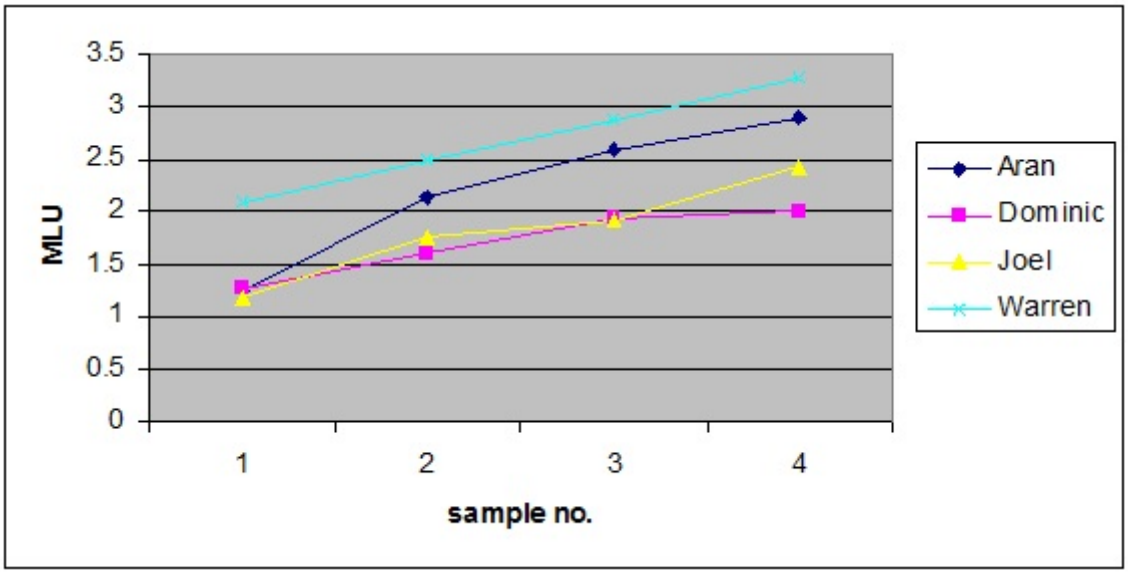

Figure 5.1 MLU scores for the Manchester subjects

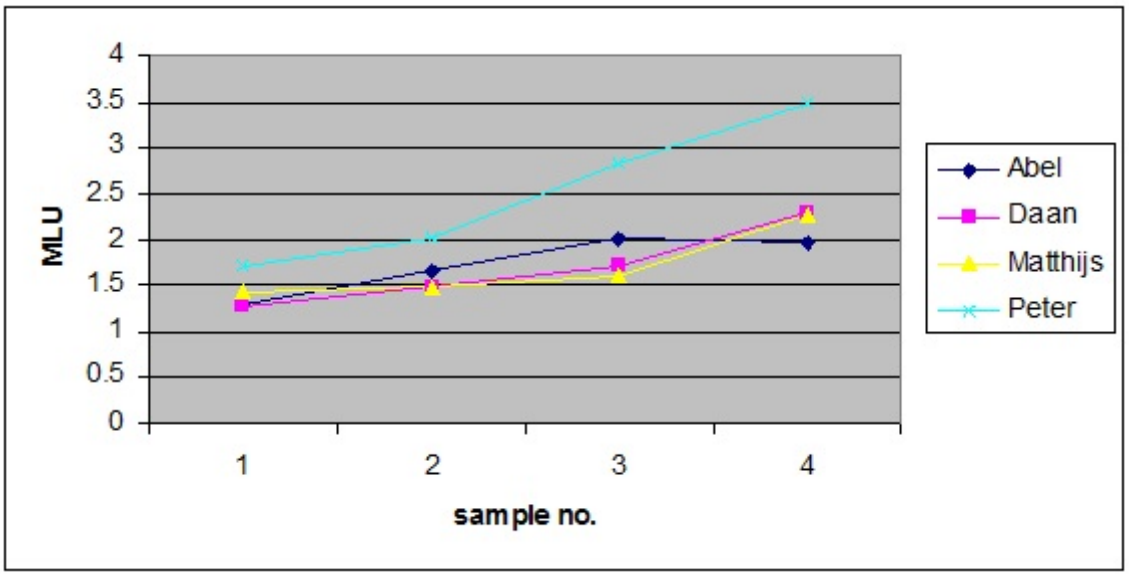

Figure 5.2 MLU scores for the Groningen subjects

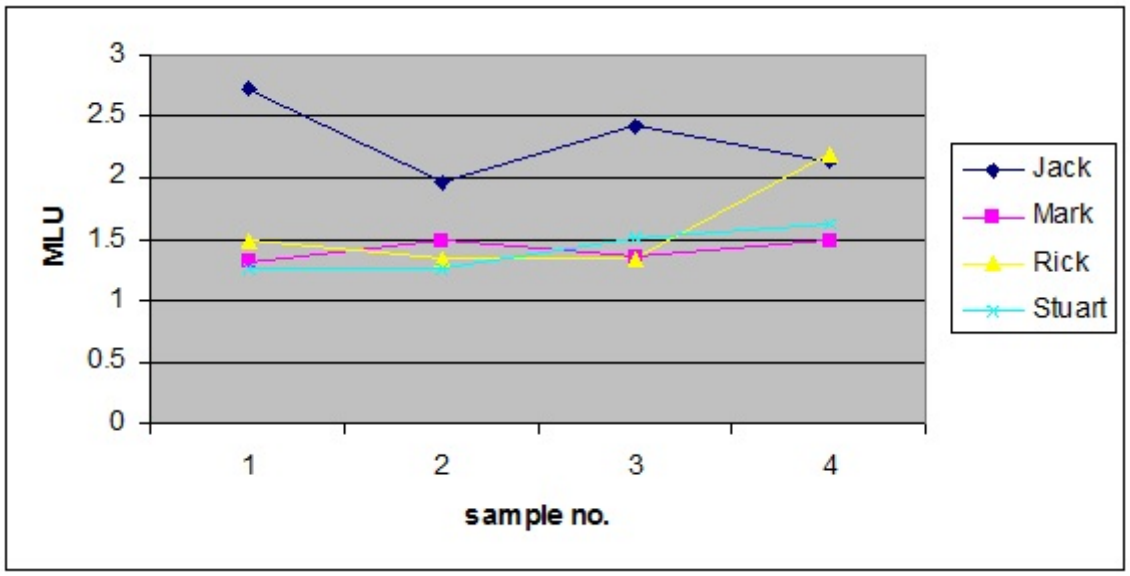

Figure 5.3 MLU scores for the Flusberg autistic subjects

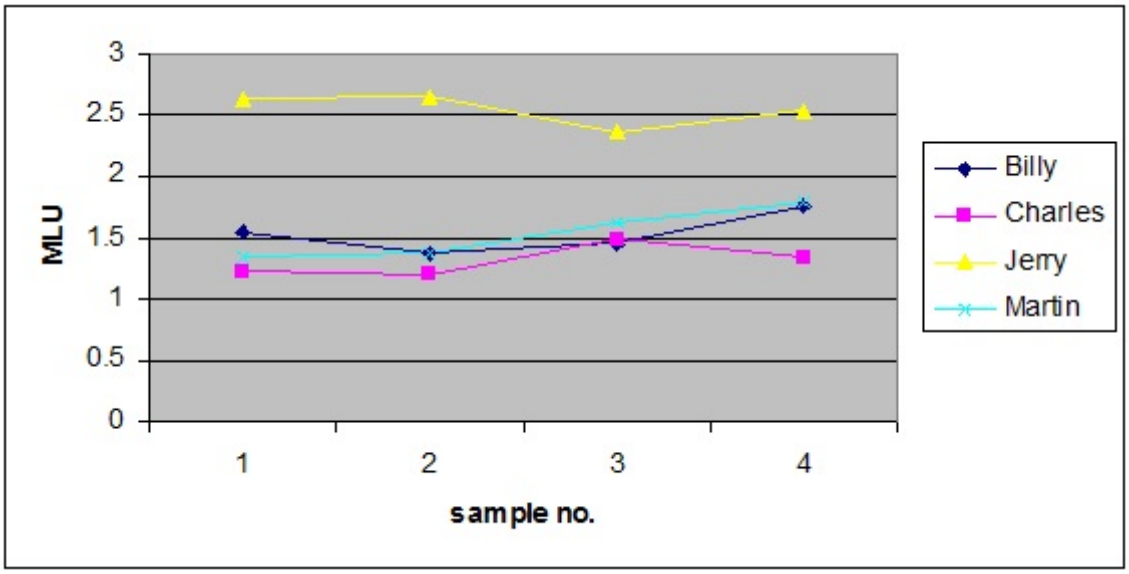

Figure 5.4 MLU scores for the Flusberg DS subjects

The impression one gains from the Flusberg data is that the quality of an autistic child's speech depends in large measure on whether he is having a 'good day' or a 'bad day' at the time of the recording. The frustration of the mothers on the 'bad days' is almost tangible, as they struggle and cajole in a vain attempt to coax their sons into paying attention and making relevant verbal responses. They reward the boys on the rare occasions when they speak in full sentences, make eye contact or point appropriately, with utterances like "that was nice talking" (FA/Rick01), "good looking at mommy" (FA/Rick02) or "good pointing" (FA/Jack06) respectively.

This brings me to the third and most serious caveat: to what extent can one conclude anything at all about 'acquisition' on the part of autistic children? Take Jack, who in FA/Jack04 repeatedly utters 'things you can bake' with no apparent relevance. These have not been classed as 'deviant' because the 'you' does not seem to be intended to mean 'I' or any other pronoun. But it is certainly 'deviant' in the broader sense because the whole utterance, not just the pronoun, is inappropriate: it seems to be an example of delayed echolalia where Jack is repeating something he has heard on a TV programme. Can we really conclude that Jack has acquired the pronoun 'you'? Jordan (1988) does raise this issue to some extent, but I believe she underestimates the extent of the problem. For autistic children, it is not only utterances like 'thank you' which are formulaic and regurgitated verbatim: virtually any utterance they produce could be echolalic, particularly since the mothers tend to exploit their sons' propensity for repetition and feed them sentences to copy:

M: what do you want?
C: tickle.
M: more.
C: more.
M: tickle.
C: tickle.
M: good boy.
%com: m tickles c
M: you like that?
M: can you say I like it?#
C: I like it.

(FA/Stuart02)

This question will be discussed further in the section concerning errors.

5.4.2.4 Flusberg Down Syndrome

Stage	Billy	Charles	Jerry	Martin
1	it(nom), it(acc), PN	it(acc), PN	I, me, my, you(nom), you(acc), he, it(nom), it(acc), PN	I, my, it(acc), PN
2	my, mine, them	you(acc)	him, them	it(nom)
3	I, me, he	-	we, they, PNg	-
4	-	I	-	-
cumulative	-	it(nom)	us, your	-

Table 5.10 Order of acquisition of pronouns in the Flusberg Down Syndrome corpus

It should be remembered that the FD subjects are paired with FA subjects. Jerry at 6;9 is the oldest in the FD group, so it is not surprising that he has acquired the greatest pronoun vocabulary at the outset, just like Jack, his counterpart in the FA group. The patterns of the two groups are broadly similar: as for normal children, object 'it' and proper nouns are the first to be acquired, followed by a smattering of 1st, 2nd and 3rd person pronouns. Martin, although not the youngest, appears to be the weakest in pronoun acquisition, with no evidence of mastery of any 2nd person forms by the end of the period studied. His pronouns look very similar to Rick in the autistic group (although he is paired with Mark, not Rick).

5.4.3 Children's Deviant Pronouns

Using the totals over the four files for each child, the most common errors were listed and are presented below along with their overall frequencies. Here the codes are used rather than the words, to indicate whether the error involves person, case, number or gender. All errors with a frequency greater than 1 have been included. Because 1st/2nd pronoun 'reversals' are of special interest, I have included a total figure for these in each case, including errors which only occur once and have therefore not been listed in the table.

5.4.3.1 Manchester

	Aran			Dominic			Joel			Warren		
Rank	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.
1	PN	PNg	4	PN	2s/n	12	PN	0	11	PN	1s/n	64
2	1s/a	1s/n	2	1s/n	2s/n	8	2s/n	0	6	PN	0	32
	1s/gd	1s/gi	2	PN	PNg	8						
	1s/n	1p/n	2									
	PN	2s/a	2									
3				PN	1s/gd	7	PN	2s/n	5	PN	2s/n	21
							3s/an	3p/a	5			
							3s/nn	misc	5			
4				PN	1s/n	6	PN	1s/a	4	3s/nm	3s/nn	14
				PN	0	6						
5				2s/n	0	4	3s/nn	3s/nm	3	1s/gd	1s/n	8
							1s/a	1s/n	3			
6				2s/a	1s/a	3	2s/a	1s/a	2	PN	2s/a	5
				PN	1s/gi	3	3s/nm	3s/nn	2	PN	PNg	5
				PN	2s/a	3				2s/n	0	5
				PN	misc	3						
7				2s/n	1s/n	2				PN	1s/gd	4
				2s/gd	1s/gd	2				3s/ gdm	3s/ gdn	4
8										3s/nn	3s/nm	3
										3s/gdm	3s/gdf	3
9										PN	2s/gd	2
										3s/nn	3p/n	2
total 1st/2nd person reversals:			1			17			4			1
total errors:			30			79			57			185
total pronouns +PNs:			699			720			495			700
error rate (%):			4			11			12			26

Table 5.11 Deviant child pronouns in the Manchester corpus

What is immediately striking is the variation between individuals in the rates and types of errors. Aran and Warren produce almost exactly the same number of pronouns plus proper nouns in total, yet only 4% of Aran's are erroneous as compared to 26% of Warren's. While Aran and Dominic only

seem to have problems with 1st and 2nd person pronouns, almost all in the singular, Joel and Warren are struggling with the 3rd person singular as well. However, some general observations can be made here. The 1st and 2nd person errors tend to fall into four categories. Firstly, the child may avoid the pronoun completely, replacing it with a proper noun:

C: **Mummy** put that in there .
M: I did not put that in there .
M: that was in there when we bought it, wasn't it ?

(M/Aran7a)

Conversely, the child may insert a gratuitous pronoun or PN, usually in an imperative:

(Mother and child are drawing pictures:)

M: I think I'll leave helicopters to Daddy .
M: mmhm .
M: shall we have a broken down car instead ?
C: **Mummy** do a broken down car .

(M/Warren05a)

The remaining errors involving 1st and 2nd person pronouns are errors of person or case, or very rarely number:

M: who's in there ?
C: **me** in there .

(M/Aran07a)

The 3rd person errors, by contrast, almost invariably involve gender:

C: burglar driving .
M: is he driving ?
C: **it**'s got hat .
C: look .
C: **it**'s got a hat on .
M: he has got a hat on .

(M/Joel20a)

It is worth noting that while all four subjects had acquired 'it' at the outset and 'he' by the end of the period observed (Table 5.7), none of them had acquired any of the feminine pronouns. Joel had in fact acquired 'him' and 'his' as well, and over-used them, substituting 'his' for possessive 'her' on three occasions. It is possible that this was not a merely linguistic error but originated from not being able to tell the differences between the sexes in real people and/or toys:

(R = investigator 1, CA =investigator 2, M = mother, C= child)

R: what's that ?
C: little man .
CA: a man ?
C: no .
C: a little boy .
CA: a little boy .
M: a little boy . [...]
C: here you are .
C: here you are .
M: it looks remarkably like a little girl to me .

(M/Joel8a)

However, one should never underestimate children's capacity for humour. In a later recording Joel produces a highly entertaining example of gender/identity confusion which one suspects is very much tongue in cheek:

M: what's his name ?
C: no .
M: hasn't he got a name ?
M: that's not very nice .
M: you've got a name , haven't you ?
C: no .
C: I haven't got a name .
CA: you haven't got a name ?
CA: you have .
M: what shall we just call you then ?
M: thingy ?
C: no .
M: say oy thingy .
M: come here .
M: so your name's not Joel then ?
C: no .
M: what <is it> [>] ?
C: <I'm a girl> [<] .
M: you're a girl , are you ?
C: yeah .
M: you get me worried you do .

(M/Joel20a)

All four of the Manchester subjects produced some 1st/2nd pronoun reversals, and Dominic produced no fewer than 17 of them, a number only exceeded by one of the autistic subjects (Jack).

C: out fridge .
M: yes .
M: and you dropped it .
M: and I couldn't get it in time .
C: **you**@sc[18] drop it .
M: and I wasn't very happy with you , was I ?
C: not happy , did **I** ?
M: mmhm .
M: more mess for Mummy to clean up .

(M/Dominic14b)

As can be seen from the above example, these reversals can often be attributed to immediate echolalia, and indeed Dominic's mother comments on his echolalic tendencies:

M: who's going to win ?
C: xxx win .
M: you're just repeating what I'm saying now , aren't you ?

(M/Dominic14a)

5.4.3.2 Groningen

	Abel			Daan			Matthijs			Peter		
Rank	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.
1	1s/a	1s/gd	3	PN	2s/n	9	PN	0	36	PN	1s/n	146
2	1s/a	misc	2	PN	0	4	PN	2s/n	17	PN	0	37
				misc	1s/gi	4						
3				PN	1s/n	3	PN	1s/n	8	PN	2s/n	12
4				2s/n	1s/a	2	PN	1s/a	4	PN	1s/a	6
				2s/a	1s/a	2						
				misc	1s/n	2						
				PN	2s/a	2						
				3s/nf	3s/nm	2						
				3s/am	3s/nm	2						
				3s/nm	3s/nn	2						
				PN	PNg	2						
				3p/a	misc	2						
5							PN	1s/gd	2	3s/em	1s/e	3
							0	1s/gd	2	PN	2s/a	3
							PNg	1s/gi	2			
							PN	2s/gi	2			
							PN	PNg	2			
6										PN	1s/gd	2
total 1st/2nd person reversals:			**1**			**7**			**0**			**1**
total errors:			**12**			**54**			**81**			**218**
total pronouns +PNs:			**158**			**255**			**248**			**518**
error rate (%):			**7**			**21**			**33**			**42**

Table 5.12 Deviant child pronouns in the Groningen corpus

The Groningen subjects were selected to match the Manchester boys on age, yet their error rates are approximately double those of their English counterparts. Statistical tests were not conducted but it is likely that the differences would be highly significant. This reinforces the impression, noted in 5.4.2.2 above, that the Dutch subjects lag behind the English ones in their pronoun acquisition. The types of errors made are also of a more basic nature. In the case of Matthijs and Peter almost every

error consists of using a proper noun in place of the appropriate pronoun or where neither a name nor a pronoun is appropriate:

(C = child, M = mother, F = Frank (researcher))

C: **Peter** zit boven op **mama** .
(Peter's sitting on Mummy)
M: Peter zit boven op mama ja .
(yes, Peter's sitting on Mummy)
M: dat had mama gemerkt dat je boven op +...
(Mummy had noticed that, that you're sitting on ...)
F: 0 [=! laughs] .
M: en Peter is er weer af .
(and Peter has got down again.)

(G/Peter, pet20113)

Daan is the only subject who exhibits 3rd person pronoun errors, and as with the English children these mainly involve gender:

(P = Paulien (Researcher), M = mother, C = child)
(Playing with Sesame Street toy 'Cookie Monster')

P: Koekiemonster op de motor.
(Cookie Monster on the motorbike)
P: ook op vacantie erachteraan.
(going on holiday too, following behind)
P: <daag> ["]. *("bye!")*
P: <doeg> ["]. *("bye!")*
M: ik weet (he)t niet hoor Daan.
(I don't know [how to do] it, you know, Daan)
C: **ze** moet zo staan. *(she has to stand like this.)*
P: oh moet ie zo, sorry.
(Oh is that how he has to go, sorry.)

(G/Daan, daa20511)

All but Peter exhibit some 1st/2nd person reversals, and Daan makes no fewer than 7 of these:

(P= Paulien (researcher), C= child, M= mother)

(Playing with clay)

P: dat is zacht. *(that's soft)*
C: heu.
M: kijk, mama gaat uitrollen, net als met brood.
(look, Mummy's going to roll it out, just like with bread.)
M: zie je? *(do you see?)*
M: Daan?
C: hier zie **je**. *(here you see)*

(G/Daan, daa20304)

The reversals can often be attributed to echolalia, as in the example here.

5.4.3.3 Flusberg autistic

	Jack			Mark			Rick			Stuart		
Rank	**actual**	**target**	**no.**	**actual**	**target**	**no.**	**actual**	**target**	**no.**	**actual**	**target**	**no.**
1	2s/a	1s/a	11	PN	2s/n	10	PN	2s/gd	4	PN	0	5
2	PN	2s/n	8	PN	1s/a	7	2s/a	1s/a	3	PN	1s/n	4
3	2s/n	1s/n	5	PN	PNg	5	PN	1s/a	2	PN	1s/a	2
	PN	1s/n	5				PN	PNg	2	PN	misc	2
	PN	2s/a	5									
4	3s/af	3s/am	3	2s/a	1s/a	4						
	3s/gdf	3s/gdm	3									
5	3s/nm	1s/n	2	2s/a	misc	3						
	1s/n	2s/n	2	PN	2s/a	2						
	2s/n	2s/gd	2									
	3s/nf	3s/nm	2									
	2s/n	0	2									
total 1st/2nd person reversals:			**19**			**5**			**4**			**1**
total errors:			**58**			**36**			**14**			**16**
total pronouns +PNs:			**590**			**182**			**120**			**116**
error rate (%):			**10**			**20**			**12**			**14**

Table 5.13 Deviant child pronouns in the Flusberg Autistic corpus

As with the acquisition data discussed in 5.4.2.3, the error figures for the autistic subjects yielded a few surprises. Firstly, the overall error rates fell easily within the range of the rates for the Manchester subjects and well below those of the Groningen boys. Secondly, the types of errors were

much the same as those made by the normally-developing children: proper nouns in place of 1st and 2nd person singular pronouns, errors of person and case with 1st and 2nd person pronouns, and errors of gender with 3rd person pronouns.

C: no came **mommy's** room.
M: no came mommy's room.
M: that's right.
M: you stayed in your room all night.
M: that's why we said we'd make something today.
C: jello.

(FA/Mark, mark02)

(Playing with building blocks:)

M: <oh> [/?] good boy.
M: <oh> [/?] you're opening them?
M: and put them on.
M: you squeeze them.
M: <oh> [/?] squeeze them.
C: **stuart** good boy.

(FA/Stuart, stuart04)

As expected, all the autistic children made some 1st/2nd pronoun reversals. What is surprising is that they made so few of them. Stuart only produced one reversal, which means that in 3 out of the 4 recordings examined he did not produce any at all. Jack is the only subject who conformed to the autistic stereotype, with 19 reversals in total.

M: let me see the pen.
C: no!
M: can you share one pen with me?
C: no <ho, ho, ho> [/?].
M: one little pen.
C: can **you** share.
M: thankyou.
C: **I** told **you** before.

(FA/Jack, jack06)

Many of the autistic children's reversals are obviously attributable to immediate echolalia, as with Jack's 'can you share' above. Not only the pronouns but the whole modality and illocutionary force of the utterance have been uttered in the role of the interlocutor, yet from the linguistic context it seems that this sentence accompanies his compliance with his mother's request and equates to 'OK

I'll share'. This phenomenon, however, is apparently not peculiar to autistic children, as we have seen from van der Geest (1997) as discussed in 4.3.2.

Jack's 'I told you before' has been coded as containing two further pronoun reversals, since it looks suspiciously like a regurgitation of something he has heard an adult say to him, probably in the context of his refusing to share things. While immediate echolalia is easy to spot, identifying delayed echolalia is more often a task for inspired guesswork.

Jack is the only child who used 3rd person forms to replace 1st person pronouns ('he' for 'I'). While Jordan appears to be correct to describe this as a feature which is peculiar to autistic children, it is important to note that only one out of four autists in this study exhibited it. It would therefore be unwise to overstate the prevalence of this phenomenon and postulate it as typical, let alone diagnostic, of autism.

5.4.3.4 Flusberg Down Syndrome

	Billy			**Charles**			**Jerry**			**Martin**		
Rank	**actual**	**target**	**no.**	**actual**	**target**	**no.**	**actual**	**target**	**no.**	**actual**	**target**	**no.**
1	PN	PNg	10	-[19]	-	-	1s/gd	1s/n	2	1s/gd	1s/n	2
							1s/n	2s/n	2			
2	PN	2s/n	9									
3	PN	1s/n	6									
4	PN	2s/gd	5									
5	PN	1s/a	3									
	1s/a	2s/gd	3									
6	PN	1s/gd	2									
	PNg	1s/gd	2									
total 1st/2nd person reversals:			**4**			**1**			**3**			**0**
total errors:			**50**			**3**			**8**			**6**
total pronouns +PNs:			**470**			**155**			**108**			**93**
error rate (%):			**11**			**2**			**7**			**7**

Table 5.14 Deviant child pronouns in the Flusberg Down Syndrome corpus

The DS figures were the most surprising of all. Firstly, the overall error rates were lower than those for the Manchester group. Again, no formal statistical tests were carried out but it is likely that the

differences would be significant. Secondly, despite the very low number of errors in general, three out of the four subjects produced 1st/2nd person pronoun reversals.

%com: c still has bean bags in his hand
C: <oh> [/?] mom **can I hold these for you**.
*M: let me hold these for you while you climb up on the chair.
%com: c crawls up on chair
M: go ahead.
M: there you are.

(FD/Martin,martin04)

Taken in context, 'mom can I hold these for you' in this example must mean 'mom please hold these for me'. It is probably a phrase Martin has heard his mother use in the past, in other words delayed echolalia. Such verbatim regurgitation of whole phrases is more commonly associated with autistic children, as we have seen.

We noted in 3.5.3 the claims of Tager-Flusberg et al. (1990) and Dooley (1976) that DS children tend to "rely more heavily on closed class forms than on specific nouns, whereas the reverse pattern was found for the autistic children." (Tager-Flusberg et al. 1990:13) In general there seems to be a folk-linguistic belief[20] that DS children are often difficult to understand because they avoid proper nouns and over-use pronouns, leading to ambiguity. No evidence for this was found in the current study. On the contrary, on the rare occasions that these subjects did make errors they used proper nouns in place of 1st and 2nd person pronouns, just like the normal and autistic children.

5.4.4 Mothers' Deviant Pronouns

Using the totals over the four files for each mother, the most common substitutions were listed and are presented below along with their overall frequencies. All substitutions with a frequency greater than 1 have been included. My findings can be compared with those of Wills (1977) as discussed in 4.3.4.1. However, it must be borne in mind that Wills' categories were coarser than mine: for instance she has a single label "S-> we (let's)" which covers all instances of the parent referring to him- or herself in the 2nd person plural, whereas the matrices produced for the current study enable finer distinctions to be made, e.g. between 'we' for 'I' and 'us' for 'me'. To make direct comparisons with Wills, some of my categories would need to be aggregated.

5.4.4.1 Manchester

	Aran			Dominic			Joel			Warren		
Rank	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.
1	1p/n	2s/n	94	1p/n	1s/n	48	1p/n	2s/n	34	1p/n	1s/n	45
				PN	1s/n	48						
2	3s/nm	3s/nn	51	1p/n	2s/n	25	PN	1s/n	15	1p/n	2s/n	43
3	1p/n	1s/n	50	PN	2s/n	16	1p/n	1s/n	13	3s/nm	3s/nn	31
4	PN	1s/n	36	PN	1s/a	14	3s/nm	3s/nn	12	2s/n	0	30
	2s/n	0	36									
5	PN	1s/a	33	2s/n	0	9	2s/n	0	8	1p/a	1s/a	23
6	3s/nf	1s/n	20	PNg	2s/gd	6	PNg	1s/gd	5	PN	1s/n	21
				3s/am	3s/an	6				PN	2s/n	21
7	3s/am	3s/an	15	3s/nm	3s/nn	4	3s/nm	2s/n	4	PN	1s/a	14
							PN	2s/n	4			
							PN	2s/a	4			
8	1p/a	1s/a	8	3s/nf	1s/n	3	1p/a	1s/a	3	PNg	2s/gd	9
	PNg	1s/gd	8	1p/a	1s/a	3	PN	1s/a	3			
				PNg	2s/gi	3	3s/am	3s/an	3			
9	3s/gdm	3s/gdn	5	PNg	1s/a	2	3s/nf	1s/n	2	3s/am	3s/an	7
				PNg	1s/gd	2	1p/a	2s/a	2	3s/gdm	3s/gdn	7
				3s/nf	3s/nn	2	PNg	2s/gd	2			
				3s/gdm	3s/gdn	2						
				3s/an	3p/a	2						
				PN	misc	2						
10	3s/nm	2s/n	3							PNg	1s/gd	6
11	3s/nn	2s/n	2							3s/nf	1s/n	2
	1p/a	2s/a	2							PN	2s/a	2
	1s/a	misc	2							PN	0	2
	3s/nn	misc	2									
total 1st/2nd person reversals:			**98**			**27**			**38**			**44**
total errors:			**382**			**209**			**121**			**268**
total pronouns +PNs:			**4286**			**2944**			**2173**			**2309**
'error' rate (%):			**9**			**7**			**6**			**12**

Table 5.15 Deviant maternal pronouns in the Manchester corpus

The Manchester mothers exhibited remarkable homogeneity. Substitution of 'we' for subject 'you' was ranked as the 1st or 2nd most common feature for all four subjects, and substitution of 'we' for 'I' was ranked 3rd or above. Use of a proper noun such as 'Mummy' for 'I' was ranked between 1st and 6th. None of this was surprising since these are among the most frequent features of 'motherese' documented by Wills (1977). However, another high-frequency phenomenon was unexpected: the substitution of 'he' (3s/nm) for subject 'it' (3s/nn). This appeared between the 2nd and 7th ranks for all the Manchester mothers.

M: oh .
M: I've got to put the monkey in with the car+driver ?
M: alright then .
M: if I can fit him in .
M: there we go .
M: oh dear .
M: **he**'s had a crash .

(M/Dominic09b)

This feature is mentioned by Wills under the heading "impersonal -> personal" and ranked 9th in her list, which is substantially below the ranking in my data, especially when one considers that each of Wills' categories covers two or more of mine. Wills describes the phenomenon as follows:

> "The interchangeability of *who* and *what*, *he* or *she* and *it*, and 3P and *you* (addressing things or beings not generally considered to be endowed with participant potential) produces the familiar BT (and poetic) phenomenon of personification."
>
> (Wills 1977:287).

In alluding to the "interchangeability" of 'he or she' on the one hand with 'it' on the other, Wills overlooks an important aspect: that of gender. Personification by definition applies to inanimate objects which, to an adult, would not normally be thought of as gendered; or of animals (real, toy or depicted ones) whose sex is indeterminate. What is striking here is the fact that they almost *always* materialised in masculine form: apart from 2 instances of Dominic's mother replacing subject 'it' by 'she', the only inappropriate uses of third person feminine pronouns by any of the mothers were when they referred to themselves, i.e. they used 'she' to replace 'I', not 'it'.

Moreover I would dispute Wills' claim (1977:287) that "these forms are strictly reserved for non-serious situations (e.g. language practice, play, chatting)". This tends to trivialise the consequences of such gendered child-directed speech. Consider the following example:

C: elephant .
M: an elephant yes .
C: drink .
M: yes **it** uses **his** trunk to drink, doesn't **he** ?

(M/Aran,Aran01b)

Such discourse arguably serves a serious educational purpose and can be compared to the kind of interaction that children are likely to have with their teachers on starting school (see Sinclair and Coulthard 1975; Willis 1992). I do not see any reason to designate it "non-serious". What is particularly remarkable in this example is that the mother begins with the correct pronoun 'it' but promptly switches to 'his' mid-sentence, reinforcing the gendered personification with the 'he' in the tag question.

The fact that animals of indeterminate gender are invariably 'he', not 'she', was observed by Miller and Swift (1976) in one of the earliest expositions of feminist linguistics:

> "Younger children have no way of knowing that the mouse or the turtle or the crocodile referred to as *he* is not necessarily a male. 'Here he comes', says the TV personality of the woolly bear caterpillar as it marches across the screen. 'The groundhog won't see his shadow today', the weather forecaster begins. ... In short, the male is the norm, and the assumption that all creatures are male unless they are known to be female is a natural one for children to make."
>
> (Miller and Swift 1976:48-49).

It is only 'natural', of course, because the adults around the child make it so through their language. The consequences of this for the child's socialisation are very serious indeed according to Nilson:

> "A young boy who is accustomed to hearing himself and his possessions ... referred to with masculine pronouns has excellent readiness for acquiring the standard formal rules guiding the treatment of gender in English. As he expands his world to include progressively larger circles of environment and acquaintances he simply expands the size of the body of things referred to with masculine pronouns. It's a very natural process for him to learn that every animate being not obviously female is treated as masculine."
>
> (Nilson 1973: 17).

This "natural process" for a boy is nothing of the sort for a young girl, and contributes to her linguistic alienation. It is rather depressing to observe that nothing seems to have changed since the 1970s when feminist linguists first documented the process: the mothers in this study continue to transmit gender bias to their sons. A thorough exploration of the way in which parental pronoun usage contributes to young children's gendered socialisation is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but it would certainly be a fruitful area for further research on the basis of these findings.

Another prominent feature in the CDS of these mothers, ranking 4th or 5th for all of them, was the presence of subject 'you' in imperatives, where adult speech would omit it:

M: are you going to get a book ?
C: yeah .
M: xxx .
M: **you** get a book then .
M: we'll read a book .

(M/Joel,Joel02a)

The 'you' here is not contrastive and is therefore gratuitous. Mothers apparently feel instinctively that a 'bare' imperative does not make it sufficiently clear to the child that he is the person expected to carry out the action.

In practice, the 'motherese' features tended to fall in clusters: mothers might produce a series of utterances which exhibited no CDS features and then switch into a marked CDS register, with several pronoun substitutions in a single sentence:

M: <let's look for another> [//] let's look for the ball again, shall we ?
M: **you** tell **Mummy** when **we** find the ball.

(M/Warren,Warren05b)

In the above utterance 'you' is redundant, 'Mummy' replaces 'me' and 'we' replaces 'you'.

5.4.4.2 Groningen

	Abel			Daan			Matthijs			Peter		
Rank	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.
1	1p/n	1s/n	5	PN	1s/n	28	PN	1s/n	62	PN	1s/n	55
2	PN	2s/n	4	PN	2s/n	18	PN	2s/n	16	PN	2s/n	52
3	1p/n	2s/n	2	1p/n	1s/n	12	1p/n	1s/n	12	PN	1s/a	13
	2s/n	0	2									
4				1p/n	2s/n	9	PN	1s/a	9	PN	2s/a	8
							1p/n	2s/n	9			
5				PN	1s/a	4	3s/nf	1s/n	6	1p/n	2s/n	4
				PN	2s/a	4	2s/n	0	6			
6							PN	2s/a	5	1p/n	1s/n	3
										PN	misc	3
7							PNg	2s/gi	3	PNg	1s/gd	2
							3s/em	2s/e	3	3s/gdm	2s/gd	2
							PN	0	3	PNg	2s/gd	2
										3s/em	2s/e	2
										2s/a	misc	2
8							misc	1s/n	2			
							PNg	1s/gd	2			
							PNg	2s/gd	2			
total 1st/2nd person reversals:			2			9			9			5
total errors:			16			82			143			153
total pronouns +PNs:			422			942			1230			743
error rate (%):			4			9			12			21

Table 5.16 Deviant maternal pronouns in the Groningen corpus

Patterns for the Dutch data were more variable. Frequencies were lower and therefore less reliable, partly because the total amount of speech recorded was less (about half an hour per recording as opposed to an hour for the Manchester children), and partly because quite a lot of the transcribed speech was excluded from the analysis because it was not addressed to the child. There was a further factor: the Manchester mothers tended to use a lot of tag questions in their speech to their sons, e.g.:

M: no well you don't pull people's hair, **do we ?**
M: because it hurts, **doesn't it ?**
M: and then they cry, **don't they ?**

(M/Aran,Aran01b)

Use of tag questions roughly doubles the number of pronouns per sentence, and also permits observation of interesting phenomena such as the switch from 'you' to 'we' in the example above. This is not the case for Dutch, however, since like all languages other than English (to the best of this author's knowledge) Dutch uses invariant tags such as 'toch?' and 'hè?' which do not include pronouns:

(Mother is looking at a book with Daan)

M: binnenkomen. *(come in)*
%com: picture of Ernie entering a room and banging the door against Bert's head.
M: kijk, lopen. *(look, walking)*
M: dat kun jij **hè?** *(you can do that, **can't you?**)*
M: en rennen. *(and running.)*
%act: DAA acts out running [?] .

(G/Daan,daa11121)

Nonetheless some notable patterns emerged from the data. The Dutch mothers were less homogeneous than their English counterparts. While Abel's mother's CDS pronoun usage was comparable to that of Dominic's mother, the other Dutch mothers made less use of 'we' as a substitute for either first or second person singular, preferring to use their own or the child's name respectively:

M: zal **mama** e(en)s even de fotos pakken, van **Daan** in de draaimolen?
*(Shall **Mummy** just get the photos, of **Daan** in the merry-go-round?)*
M: dat je die aan Paulien laat zien?
(So you can show them to Paulien?)

(G/Daan,daa20121)

Nonetheless all the mothers did produce examples of substituting the 1st person plural for both 1st and 2nd persons singular:

(Matthijs is doing a jigsaw puzzle:)

M: zie je dat? *(do you see that?)*
C: beer, beer, klaar! *(bear, bear, done!)*
M: dat is (ee)n beer hè? *(that's a bear, isn't it?)*
M: de beer is klaar. *(the bear is done.)*
M: zullen **we** nou de taart af maken?
*(shall **we** finish the cake now?)*
M: maak jij de taart eens af.
(you finish the cake.)
C: eh, ja. *(er, yes)*
C: taart. *(cake)*
M: toe maar. *(go on.)*

(G/Matthijs,mat20121)

In the above example, the child is doing the jigsaw unaided and the 'we' must refer to him. In the following example the 'we' clearly refers to the mother:

(Mother has just taken Peter to the toilet:)

M: kom maar . *(just come here)*
M: gaan **we** je broek weer aan doen .
*(**we**'ll put your trousers back on.)*

(G/Peter, pet11110)

There are some features of the Groningen data which are not shared with the Manchester data. The mothers of Matthijs and Peter both use 3rd person emphatic pronouns in place of 2nd person ones:

(Matthijs is playing with marbles but asks the researcher Evelien for help)

E: doe maar er in. *(just put them in it)*
M: nou, Thijs, doe eens niet zo gek.
(Now, Thijs, don't be so silly)
E: nou.
M: **Thijs** moet het maar **zelf** doen, hoor.
*(**Thijs** just has to do it **himself**, you know)*
C: Ien helpen, Ien helpen. *(Ien help, Ien help)*
E: nee, **Thijs** kan **zelf**.
*(No, **Thijs** can [do it] **himself**)*

(G/Matthijs,mat20121)

In this case both the mother and the researcher refer to the child in the 3rd person.

The 'gender issue' described above for the Manchester data does not apply in the same way to the Dutch mothers, because the Dutch language still contains the vestiges of grammatical gender and

all nouns are either common gender, with 'de' as the definite article, or neuter gender, with article 'het'. Speakers of the Belgian (Flemish) variety, and perhaps some older speakers of Netherlands Dutch, may still regard 'de' words as either masculine or feminine, but by and large this division has broken down for today's speakers. While 'de' can be regarded as a gender-neutral determiner, therefore, a problem arises when a 'de' word has to be referred to by a pronoun: does one use 'hij' or 'zij'? The answer appears to be that, in the absence of 'natural' gender cues, it is usually 'hij' except when the noun denotes an institution, when 'zij' is increasingly used. There is a get-out from this dilemma, in the form of the common gender 'die'. 'Die' can also be a demonstrative pronoun corresponding to 'that', either before a noun or alone, as in English, and at times during coding it was quite difficult to decide whether a given instance was a personal pronoun or a demonstrative. Instances of the former were coded '3s/n' or '3s/a' while the latter were ignored for this study. The closest English equivalent is singular 'they/them', which has a long and honourable history as a generic pronoun (Bodine 1975), despite the best efforts of prescriptive grammarians to squash it; but while singular 'them' did occur in the CDS of Warren's mother, this feature was generally absent from the English data unlike 'die' which was very common in the Dutch data.

Notwithstanding considerable use of 'die', the Dutch mothers still produced 2-3 times as many masculine pronouns as gender-neutral ones and, just like their English counterparts, many times more masculine than feminine. They could not be said to be 'personifying' inanimate objects or animals with their pronoun usage, because Dutch retains a degree of grammatical gender which rules out use of the neuter for all such referents which are not labelled with 'het' words. Dutch is currently in the process of re-organising its gender system in a way which could still be characterised as exemplifying "he-man" language (Spender 1980:147), although less obviously so than its earlier manifestations. It is possible that 'die' will increase in popularity as a gender-neutral pronoun, but further discussion of this topic is beyond the scope of the present study.

Use of gratuitous 2nd person nominative in imperatives was present in the speech of two of the mothers:

M: dat kan je wel. *(yes you can)*
M: dat heb je toch wel eens gedaan?
(you've done it before, haven't you?)
M: moet je goed drukken. *(you have to press hard)*
C: kan niet. *(can't)*
C: dit kan niet. *(this won't go.)*
M: op de grond zetten de wielen.
(put on the ground, the wheels.[21])
M: zet **je** de wielen <op de grond> [>].
***(you** put the wheels on the ground.)*
C: <hier> [<]. *(here)*
M: ja, dat is goed. *(yes, that's right)*
C: zo. *(like this)*
M: ja, daar moet het aan.
(yes, it has to go on there).

(G/Abel,Abe20323)

This appears to be exactly the same phenomenon as that encountered with the Manchester mothers. As in the English data, the redundant 'you' often appears when the mother's initial attempts to get the child to do something have not succeeded. Its use, however, was not universal among the Dutch mothers.

5.4.4.3 Flusberg autistic

	Jack			Mark			Rick			Stuart		
Rank	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.
1	PN	2s/n	136	2s/n	0	25	PN	1s/a	20	PN	1s/a	11
2	PN	1s/a	43	1p/n	2s/n	22	2s/n	0	10	2s/n	0	10
				1p/a	2s/a	22						
3	PN	1s/n	25	3s/nm	3s/nn	19	1p/n	1s/n	8	PN	1s/n	6
							3s/nm	3s/nn	8			
4	PN	2s/a	17	1p/n	1s/n	11	1p/a	2s/a	7	1p/a	1s/a	4
				1p/a	1s/a	11				PN	2s/n	4
										PNg	2s/gd	4
										PN	misc	4
5	1p/n	2s/n	12	PN	2s/n	9	PNg	2s/gd	6	1p/n	2s/n	3
6	1p/a	2s/a	8	PN	1s/n	8	PN	1s/n	5	PNg	1s/gd	2
	3s/gdm	2s/gd	8							1p/a	2s/a	2
	2s/n	0	8							PN	2s/a	2
										2s/a	misc	2
7	1p/n	1s/n	7	PN	1s/a	6	1p/n	2s/n	3			
				PNg	1s/gd	6						
8	3s/nm	2s/n	5	1p/n	3s/nn	4	PNg	1s/gd	2			
							PN	2s/a	2			
9	1p/a	1s/a	4	1s/n	2s/n	3						
10	PNg	2s/gd	2	1s/a	2s/a	2						
	3s/rm	2s/r	2	2s/n	2s/gd	2						
				PNg	2s/gd	2						
				misc	2s/r	2						
total 1st/2nd person reversals:			22			49			10			6
total errors:			285			159			77			56
total pronouns +PNs:			2094			2722			1344			948
error rate (%):			14			6			6			6

Table 5.17 Deviant maternal pronouns in the Flusberg Autistic corpus

These mothers resembled their Groningen counterparts in their CDS more closely than the Manchester sample, in that they favoured proper noun substitutions rather than 'we'. Use of 'we' in place of 'you' did occur for all mothers, but ranked 5th for Jack's mother and 7th for Rick's. Use of 'we' in place of 'I' was even less consistent, with Stuart's mother producing no examples at all (and only 1 instance of 'us' for 'me').

By contrast, gratuitous 'you' in imperatives ranked 1st or 2nd for three of the FA mothers, and 6th for the other.

There were, in general, quite high levels of 'reversals' between 1st and 2nd person. Most of these are cases of 'we', 'our', 'ours' for 'you', 'your', 'yours' etc.: but not all. There are also numerous cases of mothers prompting their autistic sons by taking their turns for them:

(Mark is stitching a sewing card)

%com: c picks up red yarn
C: red.
M: do you want to use red now?
C: red.
M: can you tell me in a full sentence?
%com: c sifts through pile of cards
C: I use red.
M: **I use red.**
M: **I want to use red.**
%com: m touches CHI's chin and directs face toward her
C: I want use red.
M: ok.

(FA/Mark,Mark01)

In this example, the mother's prompting has the desired outcome, but this is not always the case. It is likely that the parents of autistic children are well aware of their offspring's propensity for echolalia and try to exploit it as a teaching strategy: they may even be encouraged to do so by the professionals advising them. The problem with this is that the child may have no idea *which* bit of his mother's speech he is expected to repeat. A good illustration of what can go wrong comes from Brett, who was not among the children included in this study:

(Investigator has given the child a present)

M: can you say thankyou ?
C: thankyou .
C: xxx .
M: look at the little look at the little animals .
C: take out the animals off .
M: why ?
M: what do you want ?
C: take the plastic off .
M: what do you want ?
C: take the plastic off .
M: what do you want ?
C: take the plastic off please .
M: do you want me to help you ?
C: yes .
M: how do you ask ?
C: help **you** please .
C: help **you** please .
M: **say "will you help me" .**
C: will you help me ?
M: I will help you .
C: I will help you .
M: will you help me ?
C: will you help me ?
M: yes I will .

(FA/Brett,Brett01)

Brett obediently repeats his mother's prompt, 'will you help me?' but also repeats her response 'I will help you'. It is doubtful whether autistic children are really learning anything from these rote renditions.

The corpus contains numerous instances of mothers' attempts to prompt their sons backfiring on them. In the following example Mark uses the correct pronoun until his mother confuses him:

M: let's write down who gave you the cars.
C: helen.
M: full sentence.
C: helen gave **me** two car.
M: try it again.
M: helen what?
C: gave **me** car.
M: gave who cars?
C: **you** car.

(FA/Mark,Mark02)

The above extract illustrates another common strategy adopted by parents of autistic children, namely writing sentences down as the children utter them. In general this may be helpful, but it can

also be unduly constraining. In our next example, Mark's mother has tied herself to using the 3rd person singular and cannot adapt her written version to her son's quite correct use of the 1st person plural in describing what he and his classmates do during fire drills at school:

C: **we** cover **our** ears.
M: and you cover your ears?
C: ok.
M: and why does jack cover his ears?
C: outside.
M: outside at the fire drill.
C: <out> [/?] outside at the fire drill.
M: why does jack cover his ears?
C: xxx.
M: because there is a +/.
C: <l> [/?] loud.
M: loud +/.
C: noise.
M: noise.
%com: c points to words
C: <fire drill> [/?].
M: at the fire drill at the league school.
C: **we** cover **our** ears.
M: so **jack** +/.
C: **we** cover **our** ears.
M: covers +/.
C: **his** +/.
C: **our** +/.
M: **his** +/.
C: ears.
M: ears.
C: cover our ears.
M: does that make jack feel better?
C: at the fire drills.
M: at the fire drill?
C: <oh> [/?] no.

(FA/Jack,Jack 06)

The efficacy of both the 'prompting' and 'writing down' strategies is open to question as far as pronoun acquisition is concerned.

5.4.4.4 Flusberg Down Syndrome

	Billy			Charles			Jerry			Martin		
Rank	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.	actual	target	no.
1	PNg	2s/gd	41	1p/a	1s/a	12	1p/n	2s/n	24	3s/nm	3s/nn	13
				1p/a	2s/a	12						
2	PN	2s/n	39	3s/nm	3s/nn	10	3s/nm	3s/nn	19	2s/n	0	12
3	3s/nm	3s/nn	15	PN	1s/a	8	3s/am	3s/an	8	PN	1s/a	10
				1p/n	2s/n	8	3s/gdm	3s/gdn	8			
				3s/am	3s/an	8						
4	1p/n	1s/n	12	PN	1s/n	6	1p/a	1s/a	7	1p/n	2s/n	9
	1p/a	1s/a	12									
	PNg	1s/gd	12									
5	3s/am	3s/an	9	3s/gdm	3s/gdn	5	1p/n	1s/n	6	1p/a	1s/a	7
6	PN	1s/a	8	1p/n	1s/n	4	1p/a	2s/a	4	1p/n	1s/n	4
	1p/n	2s/n	8	PN	2s/n	4				PN	1s/n	4
	PN	2s/a	8							PN	2s/n	4
	2s/n	0	8							3s/am	3s/an	4
7	PN	1s/n	6	2s/n	0	3	1s/n	1s/a	2	PNg	2s/gd	3
							2p/a	1s/a	2			
							2p/a	2s/a	2			
							1s/a	misc	2			
8	1p/a	2s/a	5									
9	PN	0	4									
10	PNg	2s/gi	3									
11	PN	2s/r	2									
	3s/gdm	3s/gdn	2									
total 1st/2nd person reversals:			15			22			34			12
total errors:			201			84			99			76
total pronouns +PNs:			2272			997			2719			1987
error rate (%):			9			8			4			4

Table 5.18 Deviant maternal pronouns in the Flusberg Down Syndrome corpus

These were the most surprising findings of all. The gendered personifications ('he' for 'it') described above for the Manchester data were more frequent for all the FD mothers than the substitution of 'we' for 'I', and for all but one of the mothers they were also more frequent than use of 'we' for 'you'. 'He' in place of 'it' ranked 3rd or above for all subjects.

M: what kind of a truck is this?
C: engine.
M: fire engine.
M: mama.
C: <boom> [/?].
M: <oops> [/?]!
M: **he** crashed into all the other ones.
M: here **he** goes.
M: down here.

(FD/Billy, Billy03)

It is not clear why this should be the case: perhaps the mothers feel that it is more appropriate to talk to their sons in this way because of their low IQ. However, it should be borne in mind that the FD and FA subjects were paired off on the basis of IQ scores as well as MLU, and the FA mothers do not engage in this behaviour to anything like the same extent: Stuart's mother does not make *any* substitutions of masculine pronouns for neuter ones. One possibility is that mothers of autistic children avoid personification because this is a part of pretend play, at which children with EIA are notoriously bad (discussed earlier in 2.2.3). It is difficult enough to persuade an autistic child to treat a toy car *as a car* instead of sitting spinning its wheels: it may be unrealistic to expect him to go one step further and treat the car as if it were a living creature.

The familiar replacement of 'you' by 'we' is also encountered in this data, particularly from Jerry's mother:

C: two reds xxx.
M: why are **we** kissing cards here?
M: what's happening?

(FD/Jerry,Jerry03)

As we have seen, the FD children produce almost as many 1st/2nd pronoun 'reversals' as the FA ones, and their mothers perceive this as a problem which requires addressing. As with the FA mothers they prompt their sons for the correct pronouns and feed them utterances to repeat, with varying success:

M: <charles> [/?].
%com: m sounds out c's name
C: <charles> [/?].
M: charles.
C: <I> [/?].
C: charles.
M: charles.

M: who's charles?
M: who's charles?
M: am I charles?
C: no.
%com: c puts his hand on his chest
M: who's charles?
M: are you charles?
%com: m points to c
C: **you.**
M: <you> [/?] **you say, me.**
C: **me.**
M: **me, I'm charles.**
C: charles.
M: charles.
M: charles who?
C: charles.
C: charlesbryant.
M: charlesbryant that's right.

(FD/Charles,Charles04)

As with the autistic children, too, the reversals can often be attributed to echolalia:

(mother and child pretending toys are phones)

M: I haven't got a telephone.
M: you'll have to make me a new telephone.
M: hello, but make me a new telephone.
C: <ring ring> [/?] ring.
M: <get> [/?] get me some blue ones.
C: hello.
M: get me some blue ones over there.
%com: c makes agitated noise and hits his forehead in disgust
C: hello.
M: where's mine?
%com: c gets a "telephone" for m
C: **mine.**
%com: c makes vocalization
C: <oh> [/?] **where mine.**
M: thankyou.

(FD/Martin,Martin04)

Martin uses 'mine' to mean 'yours' and 'where mine' to mean 'here's yours'. This is clearly an instance of slightly delayed echolalia and a failure to grasp the requirements of role alternation in turn-taking, with the concomitant implications for deictic items like place adverbs and pronouns.

The speech produced by the DS children is remarkably similar with regard to its pronoun usage to that of the EIA children, with a lower overall error rate; but the speech used to them by their mothers differs. This may be partly attributable to the advice being given to them by professionals working with different types of disability, but it is likely that at least some of the differences are due to the mothers' instinctive and perhaps unconscious belief that a particular type of CDS is appropriate. It would be particularly instructive to obtain CDS samples from a mother who has a child with EIA or DS and who also has children with no disability, to see whether a switch of register (or rather, sub-register) takes place. My suspicion is that mothers of children with learning disabilities entailing low IQs instinctively treat them in a more 'childish' way with more personifications of animals and inanimate objects, *except* in the case of autistic children, whose mothers avoid imposing extra burdens of pretend play on them.

5.5 Summary

The corpus data examined here have cast doubt on the assertions of Charney (1980), Chiat (1986) and Jordan (1998), amongst others (see 4.1.1.2) that normally developing children make few pronoun 'reversals'. All but one of the normal children in this study produced some pronoun 'reversals' and some made a considerable number of them. Moreover, all but one of the DS children also produced 'reversals'. Conversely, some of the autistic children scarcely made any. Here I am in agreement with Jordan, who as we saw in 3.1.5 asserts that "there is in fact little in the way of actual reversal" in autistic children's language (Jordan 1998:12).

I have adduced here considerable support for my hypothesis that pronoun 'reversals' and echolalia are not unique to autistic children, merely that autistic children persist for longer in a stage which is common to many children, both with and without communication disorders.

One claim in the literature, at least, was borne out in my data: the consensus among the Dutch researchers that children do not use 'ik' in place of 'mij' (4.1.1.3). A similar absence of 'I' for 'me' applied to the English data. However, no instances of 'ikkemij' occurred in the Groningen data studied here, and I conclude that this was an idiosyncratic feature of the children studied by Schaerlaekens and Gillis (1987) and by Boezewinkel (1995), rather than a universal phenomenon in children acquiring Dutch.

The literature on Dutch children surveyed in chapter 4 found no instances of proper names or relationship terms replacing 2nd (as opposed to 1st) person pronouns; the Groningen data, on the contrary, contained numerous examples of this. Moreover, in contrast to Boezewinkel's assertions, errors of person did occur, although the most common error by far was substitution of proper names for both first and second person pronouns.

One claim made by Jordan was borne out by my findings: that the use of 3rd person pronouns in place of 1st person forms, which can be found in autistic speech, "has no direct parallel in normal development" (Jordan 1998:117). However, its frequency in autistic speech may have been overestimated: only one of the four children in my data exhibited this feature at all, and it was one of his less frequent error types.

A number of differences were observed between the English- and Dutch-learning children, the latter generally being slower in their acquisition of pronouns. It seems that there are differences even between closely related languages, probably largely attributable to the complexity of the pronoun system being acquired.

The speech of the mothers revealed interesting differences. While the CDS of the Manchester mothers was remarkably homogeneous, the Groningen mothers exhibited more variation in the kinds of modifications they made. There were differences in style between the four groups of mothers: Dutch CDS tends to prefer proper names to 1st person plural forms as replacements for 1st and 2nd person singular, while the mothers of English-speaking autistic children are less prone to personify

objects as 'he' compared to the mothers of normal children and in particular to the mothers of children with DS.

Notes

1. Personal communication to Boezewinkel from T. Coopmans (Boezewinkel 1995:83-4).

2. Inevitably I encountered some technical difficulties in this process: I am indebted to Leonid Spektor of the CHILDES team for his invaluable assistance in modifying some of the files to enable them to compile successfully.

3. There are three corpora in the CHILDES database named after Gina Conti-Ramsden, hence the need to distinguish them by using numerical suffixes.

4. Braine's corpus appears to have been removed from the CHILDES database since the survey for this dissertation was conducted, possibly because of the fragmentary and heterogeneous nature of the data which I have noted here.

5. Hooshyar's (1985, 1987) study involved three groups: "non-handicapped", Down Syndrome and language-impaired; however, at the time of the present research only the DS data were included in the CHILDES database.

6. In the case of the DS and Autistic subjects, only the age at the time of the first sample are given in Tager-Flusberg and Anderson (1991). The ages at the times of the samples used in this study have been inferred on the basis that the children were recorded at 4-month intervals (Tager-Flusberg and Anderson 1991:1126).

7. 'zij' could, in theory, be the subjunctive of 'zijn', the verb 'to be'.

8. I am following Quirk et al (1985:336ff) in using the terms "Genitive determinative" and "Genitive independent" for these groups of pronouns. MacWhinney (2000a:176) calls them "Possessive" and "Predicate possessive" respectively.

9. An article is required in Dutch before an independent genitive.

10. The '(n)' denotes the plural form, here and elsewhere.

11. Any reflexive form in Dutch can have '-zelf' appended to it by way of emphasis, e.g. 'jezelf', 'zichzelf', making it both reflexive and emphatic. In fact none of these forms appeared in my data.

12. The form 'jijzelf' can only be nominative, whereas 'jezelf' could be either nominative or accusative.

13. Either 'zijn' or 'haar' would be used here: there is no specific neuter or gender-neutral possessive pronoun.

14. Not all proper names in Dutch take an apostrophe in their possessive form. The official rules are complicated and even native speakers do not understand them.

15. It seemed intuitively correct to class, for instance, an instance of 'me' instead of 'I' as an unsuccessful attempt at 'I' (target form) rather than an incorrect use of 'me' (actual form). If a child does not know the correct pronoun he/she is surely likely to use one he/she does know, and this does not imply that the pronoun actually used has not been fully acquired.

16. Variants of the same pronoun have been counted together, e.g. 'k, ik, ikke.

17. These words were originally either masculine or feminine: current speakers of Netherlands Dutch no longer know which gender they are, only that they are not neuter, whereas Belgian (Flemish) speakers may still think of them as masculine or feminine.

18. The @sc symbol indicates that the vowel is reduced to a schwa.

19. Charles does not produce any errors with a frequency greater than 1.

20. The term 'folk-linguistic' originates from Hoenigswald (1966).

21. The word-order in the Dutch is unnatural here.

SECTION B:

THE USE OF PERSONAL PRONOUNS

CHAPTER 6: POLITICIANS' USE OF PRONOUNS

> When I was coming up, it was a dangerous world, and you knew exactly who they were. It was us versus them, and it was clear who them was. Today, we are not so sure who the they are, but we know they're there.
>
> (sic), George W. Bush, January 2000
> (quoted in The Guardian 14/12/00)

6.1 Introduction

Failure to conform to the "prototypical pronoun paradigm" of traditional grammar books (Wales 1996:13, Table 1.1) is by no means the monopoly of young children and their carers. As I argued in Chapter 1, the power and solidarity principles identified by Brown and Gilman (1960) manifest themselves in a variety of ways in pronoun usage which extend well beyond the use of *T* and *V* forms in the second person. In moving from acquisition to use of personal pronouns, this thesis must necessarily restrict itself to a single type of adult spoken language for its data. A significant amount of academic literature has been devoted to discussion of power and solidarity phenomena in political discourse, and this genre therefore presented itself as a suitable hunting ground. As with Part I of the thesis it was felt desirable to compare phenomena across different languages, and the availability of Party Election Broadcasts in similar quantities from the same period in both English and Dutch was a determining factor.

6.2 Pronouns in political discourse

The pronoun use of professional politicians is notoriously manipulative. Fairclough (1989, 2001) has drawn attention to this in the case of Margaret Thatcher, pointing out, for instance, that her populist style typically avoids the use of 'one' because it would sound elitist (2001:149), while making free use of generic 'you' and a very slippery 'we', whose referents slide, often imperceptibly, between 'the people'[1], the Government and the Conservative Party:

> ... now **we** do enjoy a standard of living which was undreamed of then and I can remember Rab Butler saying after **we** returned to power in about 1951-52 that if **we** played our cards right the standard of living within twenty five years would be twice as high as it was then and em he was just about right and it was remarkable because it was something that **we** had never thought of ...
>
> (Thatcher quoted in Fairclough 2001:143. The emphasis is mine, both here and henceforth)

The 'we' of New Labour in general, and Tony Blair in particular, is similarly elusive:

> "In New Labour discourse 'we' is used in two main ways: sometimes it is used exclusively to refer to the Government ('we are committed to one-nation politics'), and sometimes it is used 'inclusively' to refer to Britain, or the British people as a whole ('we must be the best'). But things are not so neat. There is a constant ambivalence and slippage between exclusive and inclusive 'we' - the pronoun can be taken as reference to the Government or to Britain (or the British)."
>
> (Fairclough 2000:35).

Fairclough comments that the ambivalence between inclusive and exclusive 'we' "is politically advantageous for a government that wants to represent itself as speaking for the whole nation" and is a "point of continuity with the discourse of Thatcherism" (2000:35-36). In fact, "'We' is a New Labour 'keyword'" (2000:164).

Even where 'we' is used exclusively throughout, similar shifts of reference can occur: Pearce remarks on a series of 'we's by Blair which begin by referring to a sub-group or faction within the Labour Party and end by apparently denoting a future Labour government:

> It's like what **we** did with the Labour party. **We** had a clear series of objectives to modernize the Labour party, bring it up to date and **we**'ve got to do the same with the country.
>
> (Blair quoted in Pearce 2001:221).

Blair's use of such devices does not always pass unnoticed. Opponents of the party in office at a given time - who may or may not be professional politicians themselves - will, on occasion, draw attention to the way the country's leaders perpetrate pronoun abuse on a gullible public. A good example of such explicit problematisation of pronoun usage in the case of Tony Blair can be seen in the speech of Paul Mackney, General Secretary of NATFHE[2], to the anti-war rally in Trafalgar Square on 18 November 2001. The full text of this speech is given in Appendix 6.1 (henceforth identified as 'Mackney' in the text): I cite some key passages here.

> Tony Blair urges **us** to remember September the 11th, and says this is why **we** are bombing Afghanistan. There is no-one here who supported the massacre on the 11th of September. But remembering the 11th of September gives no excuse, and does not justify the bombing of a country ground down by 22 years of war.
>
> They tell **us we** are fighting for democracy against terrorism, that **we** have to carpet-bomb one of the poorest countries in the world, drop cluster bombs, release daisy cutters, displace millions of people from their homes, support gangsters and rapists and drug-runners to achieve this. **Well I am not part of that 'we'. Nor are any of you part of that 'we'. This war is not in our name.** [cheering].
>
> (Mackney)

This piece of metalinguistic rhetoric predictably drew cheering from the crowd. However, it should be noted that Mackney's own use of 'we' is as versatile as Blair's. At the beginning of his speech, 'we' refers unambiguously to the union he represents:

> **We** were one of the first unions to oppose the war preparations and to oppose the bombing in Afghanistan. **We** were joined early on by the railway unions ASLEF, RMT, and I'm pleased to see that the support is growing against the war, in the unions.
>
> (Mackney)

The 'we' then becomes more ambiguous: does it still refer only to NATFHE, or to all trade unionists opposed to the war?

> **We've** seen the CWU calling for a stop to the bombing. The Scottish TUC calling for an end to the bombing. UNISON Black Members' Conference call for an end to the bombing. And **we're** asking all the other unions 'Come off the fence now'. [cheers].
>
> (Mackney)

Mackney then actually corrects himself for slipping into the sort of 'we' for which he has just berated Blair: the 'we' that identifies the audience at large with the policies of a country's government:

> At the Labour Party conference in his 'I vow to thee my country' speech, Tony Blair said 'Let **us** re-order this world'. I think **we** tried that, **well *we* didn't, that was tried before**. It was called The British Empire.
>
> (Mackney)

Mackney does not explain why he decides to retract 'we tried that' and rephrase it as 'that was tried before'. It could be argued that it is simply because neither he nor his audience were alive during the heyday of the British Empire. However, in view of his explicit 'I am not part of that 'we" a few sentences previously, it is likely that he wishes to distance himself not only from the policies of governments and monarchs of a previous era, but from government policies in general. Interestingly, though, by recasting his words in the passive voice he removes all trace of agency, which is somewhat surprising given the general ideological flavour of his speech (he is not averse to naming his class enemies, since in his next sentence he points to the nearby statue of Major General Sir Henry Havelock as depicting one of the 'villains' of the British Empire). It is also interesting that the apparent 'slip of the tongue' and its correction were retained in the published version of the speech, which strongly suggests that the 'slip' was deliberate all along: another piece of metalinguistic polemics.

Mackney's 'we', which began as denoting his trade union and fleetingly slipped into a 'we' of national, achronological unity, next becomes the inclusive 'we' of voters disillusioned by New Labour, unambiguously incorporating his hearers. This is a good example of what Beard describes as 'we' giving "a sense of collectivity, of us all being in this together" (Beard 2000:24):

> **We** hoped that a second Labour Government with a massive majority would do this [spend money on public services instead of war]. **We** were told that Gordon Brown had a War Chest. Now **we** may have been naïve, but **we** didn't expect that War Chest to be spent on a war! **We're** beginning to appreciate exactly where **we** stand with this Government. **They** always let you down.
>
> (Mackney)

Mackney is exploiting the fact that war is one of the commonest metaphors used in politics, until a real war begins: "The shadow boxing of party politics, with its metaphors of battle, becomes much less gung-ho when real victims in real wars are to be explained away" (Beard 2000:22). The speaker exposes this by making a direct link between the metaphorical 'war chest' and the real war in Afghanistan. The discourse has taken on a correspondingly belligerent tone and unsurprisingly the pronouns become those of 'us' versus 'them'. Nonetheless in his closing words Mackney retrieves the 'you' element from his inclusive 'we', ending with an imperative:

> Thank **you** for coming today. The world needs to know that this war is not in **our** name. **Stop the War now**. [cheering].
>
> (Mackney)

As Fairclough puts it (2001:19), "Politics partly consists in the disputes and struggles which occur in language and over language", and this chapter will examine a small aspect of those disputes and struggles. In what follows I will apply an analysis derived from Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Fairclough 1995a) and Critical Language Study (CLS) (Fairclough 1995a, 2001). This will involve a "description" (2001:21) of the linguistic characteristics of my chosen texts; an "interpretation" (ibid.) of the processes by which they are produced and interpreted; and also an "explanation" (2001:22) of the wider social processes within which British and Dutch people engage in parliamentary-oriented politics.

Practitioners of CDA have been criticised by Widdowson for failing to apply a theoretical model consistently, resulting in an "*ad hoc* bricolage" of theory and methodology and in subjective selection and interpretation of "whatever linguistic features suit their own ideological position" (Widdowson 1998:137). Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999:152) express the hope that the use of quantitative and computational methods of analysis will "give a firmer linguistic grounding" to claims made within a CDA approach, and it is in this spirit that the present study has adopted a corpus linguistics approach to the analysis of political discourse.

6.3 Choice of data: Party Election Broadcasts

Clearly, it is not only Prime Ministers, or even only professional politicians, who manipulate pronouns for rhetorical effect. The purpose of this chapter is to investigate the nature and extent of such manipulation by a variety of speakers participating in a specific form of political discourse. While linguists such as Fairclough (2000, 2001) have moved away from a focus on written texts to include an analysis of speeches and interviews, these still tend to be the discourse of Prime Ministers or at least of parliamentary party leaders. Beard too, describes his textbook as looking "at the language of an occupation - that of the professional politician - in the same way that we might look at the language of the medical or legal profession." (Beard 2000:2). My own concern, by contrast, was with the language of what Fairclough (2001:23-26) terms a "discourse type" within

an "order of discourse"[3]: I wanted to compare the pronoun usage of experienced orators with that of representatives of minor parties and of 'lay' people engaging in the same discourse type: do people occupying the "subject position" of politician tend to talk like politicians?

It was decided to examine the language of a sample of party election broadcasts (PEBs) for their use of pronouns. This genre has not been examined in the established literature on political discourse, with the exception of Pearce (2001, 2002, 2005), who conducted a diachronic study of British PEBs produced by the Labour and Conservative parties at the general elections of 1966, 1979, 1987 and 1997, and who like Fairclough tends to focus on the language of party leaders such as Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair. Although my corpus contains fewer PEBs than that of Pearce, my study goes beyond his because it includes samples from numerous minor parties and from individuals with no experience in government at national level and little or none at local level (and, one might add, next to no hope of ever being elected to public office). Pearce describes PEBs as "sensitive registers of social, political and cultural change" (2005:69): I would venture to add that the sensitivity of this type of data can only be improved by including as wide a range of parties as possible.

Beard does look at a range of election material from a number of parties in the UK, USA and Australia, but the material here consists of posters and manifestos: in other words, all of written modality. Televised PEBs are basically a spoken form of political discourse but because they are visual as well as oral, written texts are often incorporated into them, thus providing an opportunity to examine both modalities. I was, however, more interested in the spoken material because speakers in principle had a choice of reading an entirely pre-scripted speech or of speaking spontaneously without any notes at all. As we shall see, both of these extremes are found in the PEBs obtained, along with many intermediate degrees of 'pre-plannedness'. Written text, on the other hand, can *only* be pre-planned and does not offer this degree of choice.

In discussing broadcast political interviews, Fairclough notes the "dual institutional status" (2001:156) of such discourse types: in the example quoted earlier Margaret Thatcher is simultaneously occupying the subject positions of interviewee, media personality and political leader, which leads her to construct a particular kind of image of herself (2001:157). This is less

obvious in the case of PEBs since the discourse is usually monologic and many of the participants are *not* media personalities; nonetheless it is still true that PEBs draw simultaneously on the 'orders of discourse' of both broadcasting and politics, with consequences for the verbal behaviour of the participants. There is a further discourse type involved: the genre of PEB can be said to have been "colonized" by the discourse of advertising (Fairclough 2001:172). The public are constructed as "a community of political consumption" (2001:174): just as by constructing an ideal subject position of consumer for the viewers of TV advertisements the advertisers hope they will actually take on the role of consumers (of the 'right' brand of course) (2001:171), so by constructing an ideal subject position of voter for the viewers of PEBs the politicians hope they will actually take on the role of voters (for the 'right' party). PEBs, in fact, are a form of advertising in which "the producer and the commodity coincide" (2001:174): the (would-be) politicians are trying to sell themselves.

In fact PEBs may incorporate elements of further discourse types. Allan et al. (1995:372) describe their borrowings from other genres ranging from political speech to soap opera, while Pearce (2001:212) notes that since they first appeared on television in 1951, "the British audience has seen ones which, for example, 'look like' (either as a whole or in parts) advertisements, news bulletins, current affairs programmes, quiz shows and comedy sketches." Pearce goes on to analyse a Labour PEB from 1997 which resembles a documentary with a strong biographical emphasis, a genre common in the USA but less 'natural' in the UK: Thatcher vetoed one such PEB for the 1983 election which had been produced by Saatchi and Saatchi (Pearce 2001:211).

There were several reasons, then, for my choice of data:

1. PEBs constitute a type of political discourse which has not hitherto been extensively subjected to close linguistic analysis;

2. They include speech from both experienced politicians and people who have never held elected office, and for whom there is consequently no other available recorded political discourse;

3. They include both spoken and written material;

4. They provide an opportunity to compare samples of roughly equal length (about 5 minutes each) from a wider range of different parties than is afforded by other text types;

5. During the period when data for this chapter were being collected (2001-2003), there were general elections in both the UK and the Netherlands, providing the opportunity to compare the use of pronouns in broadcasts emanating from countries with different languages and markedly different electoral systems.

6.4 Pronoun Choices available to politicians

6.4.1 'I' versus 'we'

It is rare for a politician to use 'we' when the reference is unambiguously singular: he or she will inevitably be accused of using the 'royal we', which according to Brown and Gilman (1960) may have its origins in the Latin used by Roman emperors (see 1.1.4), and in somewhat more recent times has become a tradition among British royalty. Margaret Thatcher's proud announcement "We are a grandmother" was therefore treated with predictable ridicule (Wales 1996:64-65; Beard 2000:44). The *pluralis majestatis* also exists in Dutch (Geerts et al. 1984:165), and can be expected to evoke similar reactions if used by someone other than royalty.

Nonetheless politicians may use 'we' when 'I' might be expected or equally acceptable. Beard gives the example of Chancellor Gordon Brown's budget speech in 1998, in which Brown constantly switches between 'we' and 'I', using them in roughly equal proportions:

> **We** are determined to improve education all round. So **I** am allocating for the coming year to education an additional £250 million.
>
> ... Because **we** will always be prudent, **I** am allocating £500 million to add to the reserve in 1998-99.
>
> (cited in Beard 2000:48)

Beard comments that 1st-person singular forms have the advantage of indicating personal involvement, but the disadvantage of sounding self-important when sharing good tidings and of

showing where the blame lies when bearing bad news: "The advantage of the plural pronoun forms (we/us/ourselves/ours) are [sic] that they help share the responsibility." (Beard 2000:45).

This "shared responsibility we" can perhaps be compared to the 'we' of formal academic writing, used in both English and Dutch and traditionally known in the latter as *het bescheidenheidsmeervoud* ("the modesty plural"), (den Hertog [1895] 1973:69).

However, it is not always easy to define exactly who 'we' refers to. Sometimes the academic 'we' really does indicate that there is a partnership or a team behind the research, and the same can be said of the political 'we', so that in writing at least it is possible that there really is a first person plural. More often, though, 'we' includes an element of 2nd person, or 3rd person, or both. There is a long-standing traditional distinction (Wales 1996:58) between 'inclusive we' (i.e. 1st plus 2nd person, including the hearer/reader) and 'exclusive we' (i.e. excluding the hearer/reader: in fact it must include someone besides the speaker, who may or may not be present).

Fairclough, for one, tends to rely on the traditional 'inclusive'/'exclusive' dichotomy, but he does concede: "There is often a vagueness about who exactly 'inclusive we' includes" (2000:36). I will argue from my data that the conventional distinction does not go anywhere near far enough. Beard suggests four possibilities for the politician's 'we': these are, at least, a starting-point, but he only considers 'exclusive' variants here:

(1) 'I' plus one other (minister + prime minister)
(2) 'I' plus a group (minister + government)
(3) 'I' plus the whole country (minister + people of Britain)
(4) 'I' plus the rest of humanity (minister + people everywhere)

(adapted from Beard 2000:45)

Surprisingly, Beard omits to mention 'I plus my party' which is a very common exclusive 'we'-usage in PEBs, as we shall see. It can be said to be an example of "personalization" (Fairclough 2001:174), just as advertisers use 'we' to project a corporate identity for their company. Pearce found that in his 1997 data Blair never used 'I' to identify himself as party leader except in extracts from his speeches, apparently because he was trying to project his 'private' rather than his 'public'

face; Blair's political 'we' denoting the Labour Party, by contrast, was very much in evidence (Pearce 2001:219, 221).

Even more surprisingly Beard does not mention the inclusive 'I plus you, the listener(s)' in his list, although elsewhere he refers to the use of 'we'/'our' to "bind speaker to audience" (2000:41). Fairclough, discussing his own use of the reader-inclusive 'we' in his academic writing, acknowledges that it can make people feel "dragooned into partnership":

> "this use of 'we' can be manipulative; it can claim a spurious solidarity, for instance when a politician uses it to convince people that she is 'one of them'". [4]
>
> (Fairclough 2001:12).

Importantly, Fairclough points out that there is a directional aspect to the assimilation involved in inclusive 'we': it can either assimilate the leader to the people or the people to the leader (Fairclough 2001:148). Another aspect which Fairclough claims for inclusive 'we' is that it "serves corporate ideologies which stress the unity of a people at the expense of recognition of divisions of interest" (2001:106). This certainly rings true of the Department of Trade and Industry's equation of 'we' with 'British business' in its 1998 White Paper on competitiveness (Fairclough 2000:29). Another example is a speech by Blair during the Kosovo crisis (see below) in which 'we' at times clearly stands for NATO (Fairclough 2000:116-7).

Inclusive and exclusive 'we', then, are not homogeneous, indivisible categories. Just as politicians can slide effortlessly between inclusive and exclusive usage of 'we', so they can blur the distinction between various different inclusive or exclusive 'we's within the same speech event. A particularly convincing example of this occurs in Blair's speech in Chicago on the eve of NATO's 50th anniversary, which happened to occur while NATO was bombing Yugoslavia. Fairclough analyses the pronoun usage in this speech and concludes convincingly:

> "So 'we' (apart from when the reference is specifically to Britain) slides between NATO, G7, the 'new centre, centre-left Governments' who are oriented to the notion of the 'Third Way', as well as a more inclusive but undefined grouping of nations."
>
> (Fairclough 2000:152)

Fairclough argues that the purpose of Blair's slippery 'we' here is to imply:

> "that the small group of states defined by the intersection of the three discourses, the states which are members of NATO and of G7 and have 'centre, centre-left Governments (USA, Britain, Germany, France, and so forth) can be seen as standing for 'the international community' in the sense of the community of all nation-states."
>
> (ibid.)

Blair would probably not get away with stating "such an elitist understanding" (ibid.) explicitly: the pronoun shift has facilitated a normally unacceptable proposition. I would note in passing that it is questionable whether the 'we's here can in fact be classified as either 'inclusive' or 'exclusive': would Blair's audience feel that Blair was inviting them to feel included in the 'we' that stood for the G7, for instance, or that he was speaking *to* them on behalf of the G7?

This is only part of the picture, though: a politician who does want to emphasize divisions of interest can equally use inclusive 'we' in a contrastive way, possibly in opposition to 'them'.

> "The political discourse of New Labour is inclusive and consensual - it tries to include everyone, there are no sharp internal divisions, no 'us' versus 'them', no enemies. However, this may change: in the wake of the NATO attack on Yugoslavia (where Milosevic certainly was constructed as the enemy[5]), Blair made quite a sharp attack on public service workers."
>
> (Fairclough 2000:34)

This can be contrasted with Thatcher's discourse, which was "highly polemical and very much oriented to identifying enemies of her new right political project, dividing 'us' from 'them'" (Fairclough 2000:74).

Fairclough claims that New Labour is particularly fond of using 'we' to stand for the whole of the United Kingdom, emphasising the concept of 'one nation' which Labour appropriated from Conservative political discourse "at a point when the Conservative Party abandoned it in favour of the divisiveness of Thatcherism" (Fairclough 2000:34). We will see shortly whether the Labour Party has increased its usage of the divisive 'us' versus 'them' since Fairclough made the above observations in 1999[6].

6.4.2 'one' / 'men'

Like singular 'we', 'one' meaning 'I' is a usage associated with royalty and the nobility (Beard 2000:44). Indefinite 'one' meaning 'people in general' - a usage not mentioned by Beard - is not quite so stigmatised, but is nonetheless commonly regarded as pretentious compared with the more democratic generic 'you': Fairclough dubs it "a middle-class pronoun" (2001:149). The Dutch equivalent of impersonal 'one' is 'men': however, it cannot be used to mean 'I' and is much more common than generic 'one', even though it is only used in written Dutch and then only as the subject of a sentence (Geerts et al. 1984:263). It can be described as similar to the French 'on' grammatically, often employed in place of a passive construction.

6.4.3 'you'

Mass communication involves "many actual and potential addressees whose identity is unknown to the producer" (Fairclough 2001:106): this means that producers of mass discourse have to construct an "ideal subject position" for an ideal hearer. The actual viewers of PEBs will have to engage with this ideologically constructed 'you', who may not map onto a given individual very well. Moreover, the intended referents of 2nd person pronouns are rendered even more opaque by the fact that in modern standard English, 'you' can be either singular or plural, as can Dutch 'u' (the *V* form: see 6.1.3.4 below). The singular *T* form 'je' can also be used as an unstressed plural form, but only when the normal plural form 'jullie' has previously been used with the same referent and can thus be identified as an antecedent. (Geerts et al. 1984:165; Shetter 1994:67.)

Addressing the hearer/viewer directly as 'you', like the use of imperatives with their implicit 'you', is an important feature of what Fairclough (2001:52) calls "synthetic personalisation": "a compensatory tendency to give the impression of treating each of the people 'handled' *en masse* as an individual." A politician may use this kind of 'you' in systematic contrast with exclusive 'we' (see above), "to set up a 'we'-'you' relationship" (Fairclough 2000:86), e.g. to emphasize what 'we' the party will do for 'you' the voter.

There is also a use of 'you' which means approximately "people in general". Fairclough (2001:149) terms this an "indefinite pronoun"; I prefer the term "generic", following Quirk et al. (1985:353-4). Margaret Thatcher was very fond of this device, which served her as a very efficient tool for expressing the sort of generalisations which exactly fit Fairclough's definition of ideology as "common sense in the service of power" (2001:64). In a later portion of the same interview quoted in 6.1.1, she says:

> em I think it was Barry who said do as **you** would be done by e: **you** act to others as **you**'d like them to act towards **you** and so **you** do something for the community
>
> (Thatcher quoted in Fairclough 2001:143)

Generic 'you' is a colloquial idiom which "brings the perspective of everyday life into government" (Fairclough 2000:101) and is favoured by Blair, no doubt for much the same reasons as Thatcher: the alternative is to use the elitist 'one', which does not go down well with voters. At times, though, 'they' is preferable to 'you', even for Tony Blair, when he wishes to use a "distancing strategy" to avoid expressing too much solidarity with families living on benefits (Pearce 2001:220).

However, it seems that 'you' can be as versatile as 'we' in the mouth of a politician and may not include second-person reference at all. At times Thatcher's supposedly generic 'you' refers to her government rather than the population at large:

> ... so **you've** got to be strong to **your** own people and other countries have got to know that **you** stand by **your** word then **you** turn to internal security and yes **you** HAVE got to be strong on law and order and do the things that only governments can do ...
>
> (Thatcher quoted in Fairclough 2001:143)

Just as 'we' can mean 'you' in the words of a parent to a child (see 5.4.4.1), so it seems that 'you' in the words of a politician could really mean 'we'. The difference, according to Fairclough (2001:150), is that 'you' has a "solidarity value" which 'we' lacks, being more a pronoun of authority used by a leader on behalf of 'the people'. Perhaps it is the case that all the above varieties of 'you' have a "solidarity value", in which case Pearce may be justified in using first and second person pronouns as "interactional and on-line features" (Pearce 2005:75), which enables him to report a sharp increase in such markers in Labour PEBs from 1966 to 1997. Nonetheless I am not entirely

convinced that it is safe to generalise in this manner, though to be fair to Pearce he does count "indefinite" 'you's separately and finds these to have increased at an even more dramatic rate than the other varieties.

6.4.4 2nd person *T* (familiar) versus *V* (polite)

This distinction only applies to Dutch, which has the *T* forms 'je' (unstressed) and 'jij' (stressed) in the singular, with a plural *T* form 'jullie'. The polite form, in both singular and plural (with no number distinction in the verb ending), is 'u' (sometimes capitalised in writing). Dutch still displays evidence of what Brown and Gilman called the power semantic, although not along the axis of social class: the determining factor nowadays is age, with many older people expecting to be addressed as 'u' while returning 'je' to their younger interlocutors. There are even some families, especially in the more Catholic south of Holland and in the Flemish parts of Belgium, where parents still receive *V* from their own children and give *T* in return[7]. Other than this, Dutch has shifted from power to solidarity, with *V* being used to strangers and *T* among friends and colleagues.

One of the features to be examined is whether the choice between 'je' and 'u' in any way correlates with the political party producing the PEB. One might expect more right-wing parties, or those targeting older voters, to address their audience as 'u', while parties aiming at a younger electorate or with more left-wing ideologies would opt for the familiar 'je'.

6.4.5 Third-person forms

In the British Parliament, members are not permitted to use 'you' to each other, and have to resort to circumlocutions like 'The right-honourable lady/gentleman' (for a cabinet member) or 'The honourable member for Edgbaston', followed if necessary by a third-person singular pronoun (Beard 2000:111). The Dutch Parliament has no such prohibition. It is possible that the conventions of Parliamentary etiquette might have some influence on political discourse in general: perhaps people who are accustomed to addressing professional friends and foes in the third person are more likely to carry the habit over into other genres of political language. But in principle, speakers in PEBs

have a free choice to use 2nd or 3rd person pronoun forms, or a formulation which avoids pronouns altogether.

Notes

1. Fairclough argues convincingly (2001:153) that one of the hallmarks of Thatcher's discourse is the populist way in which she (re)structures a 'subject position' for 'the people'.

2. NATFHE: The National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education. This is the trade union which at the time of Mackney's speech represented most lecturers in colleges of Further Education in the UK, and also most lecturers in the pre-1992 universities.

3. The term "order of discourse" is taken from Foucault (1971).

4. Fairclough's use of the pronoun 'she' here is doubtless intended to be a non-sexist generic, as used elsewhere, e.g. "the sociolinguist herself" on p. 7. Nonetheless he later devotes a chapter to "The Discourse of Thatcherism", in which manipulative use of 'we' figures prominently (see 6.1.1 above for an example), so his readers could be forgiven for interpreting the 'she'-politician here as a reference to Thatcher.

5. In Blair's Chicago speech previously discussed, Fairclough argues, "the division of the world into 'us' and the rest and the demonisation of the latter as 'dictators' is a potentially dangerous rhetorical distortion of reality." (Fairclough 2000:154).

6. Fairclough states that "the time of writing" was July 1999 (Fairclough 2000:110).

7. In Belgium the Flemish variants 'gij' (stressed) and 'ge' (unstressed) are more common *T* forms than 'jij' and 'je'. The *V* form is 'u' as in Netherlands Dutch.

CHAPTER 7: ELECTIONS AND ELECTION BROADCASTS

> "Wat me opviel, is dat die journalist een agent aanspreekt met jij. Dat hoort dus niet. Een agent hoort dat ook te corrigeren. Hij staat op straat om gezag uit te oefenen. Dan is het dus gewoon *u*."
>
> *("What struck me is that that journalist addressed a police officer with 'jij'. That's not proper. An officer ought to correct that, too. He's on the streets to exert authority. So it has to be 'u'.")*
>
> Pim Fortuyn, in his penultimate radio interview,
> reported in De Volkskrant, 7th May 2002

7.1 The British Parliamentary System

7.1.1 'First-Past-the-Post'

At present the House of Commons - the lower House of the British Parliament - comprises 659 members, each of whom represents a geographical constituency of approximately 67,600 electors.[1] Registered voters living within a given constituency vote for one of a list of candidates, and the candidate with the greatest number of votes wins the seat. Accordingly, it is by no means unusual for candidates to stand on a manifesto based entirely around local issues, representing a 'party' which neither has nor seeks support outside that constituency or region. Obvious examples are the Northern Ireland parties such as Sinn Fein and the Democratic Unionist Party, and the Scottish and Welsh nationalists (Scottish National Party and Plaid Cymru respectively). There are also less obvious instances, however, such as Martin Bell who won Tatton in the 1997 General Election, standing as an Independent candidate on an 'anti-sleaze' platform against the sitting Tory MP Neil Hamilton; and Dr. Richard Taylor who won Wyre Forest from Labour in 2001 under the banner 'Health Concern' as part of a campaign against the downgrading of a local hospital.

If a sitting MP dies or resigns before the end of his/her term of office, a vacancy arises: this triggers a by-election whereby only voters in the constituency concerned are entitled to vote. By-elections are treated by the British media as highly significant barometers of public support for governments in mid-term, and consequently the parties may invest a disproportionate amount of time and energy in fighting by-election campaigns.

7.1.2 Party Election Broadcasts in the UK

Under section 93 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA), only party leaders were allowed to appear in election broadcasts on radio or TV. Unless a voter happened to live in the constituency of one of the leaders, therefore, he/she was unlikely to see or hear any of the candidates for that seat. It *was* possible to broadcast a debate between candidates, but only if all the candidates for that constituency were invited to take part. This meant that broadcasters could not, for instance, pit a Conservative candidate from one constituency against a Liberal Democrat candidate from a neighbouring one; and it handed candidates a power of veto over the rights of their rivals to be heard. Even if all the candidates agreed to take part (or waive their right to do so), in a constituency with a lot of minor parties this presented a bureaucratic and technical nightmare for any broadcaster wanting to host a debate. Moreover, a number of other restrictions applied: a party had to contest a minimum number of 50 seats in a General Election to qualify for an election broadcast, and broadcasting could not begin before the close of nominations. A maximum of five PEBs was allowed for any single party.

The Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) repealed Section 93 of the RPA, which was the source of most of these restrictions, and replaced them with a requirement for broadcasters to set up their own voluntary code. Consequently, election broadcasts in 2001 were much more diverse than those in the run-up to any previous election. Not only could a variety of candidates be shown other than the party leader, but the party could, if it chose, use the voices of professional actors, ordinary voters or children; it could communicate its message through song or informal conversation as well as through spoken prose. As we shall see, many parties seized the opportunity to experiment with new formats. In my corpus, the PEB for the Scottish National Party is set to music, and one of the Labour Party broadcasts begins like a trailer for a disaster movie. This latter is a good example of a discourse which creatively draws on more than one "discourse type" (Fairclough 2001:25).

Some restrictions remained, however: to qualify for a broadcast a party now has to be registered under the PPERA 2000, and must contest one sixth of the seats at an election. For national elections, therefore, this means a minimum of 110 candidates, more than double the previous limit.

With the deposit per candidate fixed at £500 in 2001[2], this was no trivial matter. This factor explains why, for instance, the notorious far-right British National Party (BNP) did not have a broadcast in 2001 (they did have one in 1997, prompting numerous complaints to the channels which screened it). Likewise, parties which were only standing in one constituency because they were fighting on local issues were not entitled to a broadcast. Exceptions were made, however, for parties specific to Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland. The broadcasts made by Plaid Cymru and the Scottish National Party were screened throughout the UK; those made by Northern Irish parties were only screened in Northern Ireland and consequently are not included in this study.

7.1.3 The UK data sample

In the period between the election being announced by Tony Blair (in a school) on 7th May and being held on 7th June 2001, as many TV election broadcasts as possible were recorded on video-tape from the four UK terrestrial channels (BBC1, BBC2, ITV and Channel 4), and transcribed. This yielded a data sample of eighteen broadcasts, comprising 4 for Labour, 3 each for the Conservatives, the Liberal Democrats and Plaid Cymru, and one each for the Green Party, the UK Independence Party, the Scottish National Party, the Socialist Alliance and Socialist Labour. Thus, while not all election broadcasts were captured, all the nine parties which made broadcasts were represented. The total number of word tokens transcribed (spoken, written and sung) was 9,432.

7.2 The Dutch Parliamentary System

7.2.1 Proportional Representation

The Dutch *Tweede Kamer* ('Second Chamber', = Lower House) comprises 150 members (one-quarter of the size of the British one), all of whom are elected nationally during a general election, which is held at four-yearly intervals. Each party draws up a list of its chosen candidates in descending order of official support. The person at the head of the list - not necessarily the party leader - is known as the *lijsttrekker* (literally, 'list-puller'). A Dutch voting paper is rather a large one, with the parties listed across the top from left to right and a column of candidates' names descending from each party:

Party 1	Party 2	Party 3	Party 4	etc.
lijsttrekker	lijsttrekker	lijsttrekker	lijsttrekker	etc.
candidate 2	candidate 2	candidate 2	candidate 2	etc.
candidate 3	candidate 3	candidate 3	candidate 3	etc.

Every voter in the country receives an identical voting paper in the post, and at the polling station sees an identical voting screen (voting is done by computer in most districts). The voter presses one button, choosing the name of the candidate for whom he/she wishes to vote. This is usually the 'lijsttrekker' but does not have to be. For instance, perhaps the 'lijsttrekker' is male but the voter wants to express a preference for a female candidate; or the voter simply does not like the lijsttrekker's politics or personality and wants to vote for a different member of the same party.

At the close of voting all the ballots are electronically counted, and those candidates achieving the threshold number of votes (the total number of votes cast divided by the number of seats) are automatically elected to Parliament. Each successful candidate's 'spare' votes are then redistributed down the list of his/her party, adding to the total of votes held by the next candidate down the list until that person, too, has achieved the threshold number of votes, at which point their spare votes in turn are redistributed, and so on until all 150 seats have been filled and there are, in any case, insufficient spare votes left to generate any more MPs.

This system of proportional representation tends to favour smaller parties, and to ensure that no one party ends up with an outright majority in Parliament. Governments almost inevitably consist of coalitions, and can take quite a long time to form while sensitive negotiations are carried out to this end: the procedure is described in detail in Andeweg (1995).

If a sitting MP dies or resigns before the end of his/her term of office, it is assumed that electors still support the parties in the same proportions as at the time of the last general election, and the party of the outgoing/deceased MP is asked to select a replacement. This will normally be the first unelected candidate on the party list at the last election, assuming that this person is still willing to

take up their seat. In Dutch politics, therefore, there is no such thing as a by-election. It is nonetheless possible for a government to be brought down mid-term, not by a change in the proportions of seats held by the various parties, but by a realignment of the parties forming the governing coalition.

A very informative website, www.nederlandkiest.nl, has been in existence for some years now. Pages on the different parties taking part in the 2002 General Election were downloaded and are presented as background information in Appendix 7.1 on the CD.

7.2.2 Party Election Broadcasts in the Netherlands

Since all parties in a Dutch election tend to be national ones, they are all entitled to election broadcasts. The Ministry for Education, Culture and Science (OCW) pays for free airtime on radio and television (de Zwart 2001:56). In the 2003 election the Lijst Ratelband drew explicit attention to this in its PEB, boasting that while € 15,000 of public funding was available per broadcast they had only spent € 450 on theirs and could therefore be trusted to be similarly 'zuinig' (thrifty) with the economy in general. (NL PEB 22).

Until 1998, political parties were banned from buying additional airtime via advertisements (as is still the case in the UK), but this ban was then lifted: the Socialistische Partij (SP) was the first to take advantage of this change, in the local elections of 1998 (ibid.)[3] There are a couple of exceptions to the generalisation that every party competes nationally and as such has a PEB. Firstly, although there are no constituencies as such in the Netherlands, there are 490 voting districts (*kiesdistricten)* for administrative purposes. Occasionally a party does not stand in every district. In the 2002 election two parties fell into this category: the Onafhankelijke Senaatsfractie, also known as Leefbaar Brabant, which apparently only stood in the province of Brabant; and the PvdT (Partij van de Toekomst = 'Party of the Future'), a non-serious party which seems only to have fielded candidates in the region of Den Haag (The Hague, where Parliament is located). Conversely, one party which *did* stand on a national basis in both 2002 and 2003, the SGP (Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij), did *not* produce an election broadcast. This party is an extremely conservative Calvinist organisation which has yet to admit women to its membership:

to date its religious objection to television as a matter of principle has led it to decline the OCW's generous offer of funding for airtime (de Zwart 2001:56). The Partij van de Dieren (Party for the Animals) likewise stood in the 2003 election but did not produce a broadcast, for reasons which are unclear.

Dutch Parties can, and do, use a wide variety of formats in their broadcasts: for instance, in the 1998 election the SP produced a cartoon,[4] and in the 2002 election both the SP and the PvdT delivered their election broadcasts in verse, accompanied by music.

7.2.3 The Dutch Data Sample

The sample was collected in the same way as for the English one: in the run-up to the general elections in 2002 and 2003 as many election broadcasts as possible were videotaped from the three main Dutch public channels (Nederland 1, 2 and 3) via digital satellite TV. In addition, some paid advertisements were captured during the 2003 campaign.

The first general election covered by this study took place on 15th May 2002. It is difficult to pinpoint exactly when campaigning began, since local elections were held on 6th March and some parties (such as the SP) used the same televised broadcast in their campaigns for both local and national elections. In order to remove this confounding factor and maintain maximum comparability with the British broadcasts, recording of Dutch transmissions did not begin until the second half of April, when the local elections were over. It was anticipated that this would allow plenty of time (a month, as for the UK election) to collect all 15 televised broadcasts: however, this proved not to be the case due to a dramatic and unforeseen turn of events. As Harold Wilson once remarked, "A week is a long time in politics".

The last broadcast to be recorded was that of the LPF (Lijst Pim Fortuyn). Since the LPF was the only party list to be named after a single individual, I was particularly interested in the use which Fortuyn would make of the first person singular. After some difficulties the LPF broadcast was finally captured on Thursday 2nd May. On Monday 6th May Fortuyn was shot as he left a radio interview in Hilversum, and died instantly. It is no exaggeration to say that consequently all hell

broke loose in Dutch politics, with manifestations of what can only be described as public hysteria in the wake of Holland's first political assassination.[5] There were widespread calls for the election to be postponed. After an emergency cabinet meeting, Prime Minister Wim Kok announced that the election would go ahead on the scheduled date but that all campaigning should cease: this included the transmission of party political broadcasts. While the murder of Fortuyn undoubtedly had serious consequences for the Dutch general election, the fact that all the PEBs were recorded before it occurred means that it is not a factor which needs to be taken into consideration in evaluating the 2002 data, and that the English and Dutch data can still be regarded as broadly comparable. The only dramatic event which did take place during the screening of the 2002 PEBs was the resignation, en masse, of Wim Kok's coalition government in remorse for its predecessor's failure to protect the citizens of Srebrenica seven years previously.[6] One broadcast, at least, was made or modified after this date (16th April): the PEB of Pim Fortuyn shows background footage of Kok leaving the palace after announcing his resignation to Queen Beatrix.

The electoral result of Fortuyn's assassination was a massive sympathy vote for the LPF, who with 26 seats instantly became the second largest party and were invited by the CDA to join the government, along with the VVD. However, without Fortuyn at the helm the LPF rapidly disintegrated in faction fights, scandals and vicious public rows. By the end of the year their parliamentary fraction was clearly incapable of participating in government and, with no obvious alternative coalition partners, Prime Minister Balkenende called a new general election for 22nd January 2003. Happily for the present study, this yielded a further harvest of PEBs and a handful of paid advertisements. The actual number of seats won by each party in the respective elections is given in Appendix 7.2.

Unlike the British parties, each Dutch party made only one broadcast for each election, which was transmitted repeatedly. The distribution of broadcasts, showing the unique coding numbers used in this study, is shown in Table 7.1:

Party:	2002 PEB	2003 PEB	2003 advert
GL	01	24	-
CU	02	16	29
LB	03	-	-
SP	04	25	-
D66	05	18	-
VIP	06	-	-
PvdT	07	20	-
CDA	08	17	-
DN	09	-	-
VVD	10	26	28
PvdA	11	19	-
NMP	12	-	-
LN	13	27	-
VSP	14	-	-
LPF	15	23	30
NCPN	-	21	-
LR	-	22	-

Table 7.1 Dutch Party Election Broadcasts in the data sample

As with the British PEBs, then, some parties are represented only once in the sample while others have two or three different broadcasts. There were 30 broadcasts in all. There are twice as many parties in the Dutch sample, but the total amount of text is only slightly greater than for the British corpus: 10,133 tokens. While the British broadcasts were all close to 5 minutes in length, the Dutch ones varied quite widely, from 3 minutes to 7 or 8. This did not in itself mean that they were not comparable with each other, or with the UK data: some of the longer broadcasts contained protracted periods where visual material was shown with no accompanying speech, so the total number of words was not closely related to the total length of the broadcast.

7.3 The Transcription Process

I was very conscious of the fact that there is no such thing as a neutral transcription, and that "the way one *interprets* the text is bound to influence how one transcribes it." (Fairclough 2001:22). Appendices 7.3 and 7.4 document the transcription conventions which were adopted for the English and Dutch data respectively, in an attempt to acknowledge my own such interpretations as honestly as possible.

7.3.1 Introductory announcements

All the UK PEBs begin with an introduction from the channel's announcer, '{And}[7] now, a Party Election Broadcast by [name of party]', and end with 'That was a Party Election Broadcast by [name of party]'.

There is an equivalent written introduction and identical conclusion displayed on the screen for each broadcast: 'A Party Election Broadcast by [name of party] for the General Election 7th June 2001'.

The practice with the Dutch PEBs was similar. All broadcasts begin with a spoken introduction from the channel's announcer, 'Nu volgt een programma in de zendtijd voor politieke partijen' ('There now follows a programme in the transmission time for political parties'), and end with 'U zag (or: 'dit/dat was') een programma in de zendtijd voor {de} politieke partijen' ('You were watching (or: 'this/that was') a programme in the transmission time for {the} political parties'). However, the name of the party is not announced: viewers have to work this out for themselves when the PEB begins.

What appears on the screen before and after the Dutch broadcasts varies slightly between the channels, but always has the words 'Politieke partijen' ('Political parties') at least once, often along with a logo of some kind indicating the channel.

For both the English and Dutch PEBs, these standard spoken and written announcements have not been transcribed.

7.3.2 Written material

Some of the PEBs in both languages included written text of some kind or other, and this was of potential interest for my analysis as described above (6.3). However, I decided to exclude some written language from my transcription on the grounds that it counted as visual, rather than written, material. For instance, one of the Conservative Party PEBs for the UK elections showed a fisherman reading a sign bearing an EU Fishing Directive in English and French banning fishing on certain days of the week. Rather than treating this text as part of the broadcast (in which case I would have had to include the French text as well), I took the view that the words were not part of the Conservative Party's message but on the contrary were being attributed to the European Union, to which the party was demonstrating its hostility. Similarly, when newspaper clippings were shown on screen I did not treat these as part of the PEB either: they were generally used to problematise the policies of the ruling parties and were not, I felt, to be treated as the language of the party making the broadcast since they were a kind of quotation from someone else's discourse.

This meant that when, for example, the same Conservative Party PEB (no. 6) portrayed truanting children at various times of the school day doing things they should not have been doing, the subtitle '3 pm: Art', followed by 'What are your children really learning under Labour?' was included, whereas the graffiti the children were depicted as spraying on a wall were not.[8] Detailed criteria for inclusion or exclusion of written material are listed in Appendices 7.3 and 7.4.

The mark-up code <M TX> (see below, 7.3.4) was used to indicate that the material which followed was of written modality. Each screenful of written text is allocated a new line in the transcription. Other written material was transcribed for the sake of completeness, but given the code <M TXX> to indicate to the concordance program that it was to be excluded from the analysis.

If a line of written text appeared more than once (e.g. a subtitle giving the name of a speaker), this was treated as an intentional part of the text and transcribed as often as it appeared. Text which remained on the screen for protracted periods was transcribed only once. This inevitably led to some discrepancies: for instance, in the Dutch broadcasts the VVD had rather irritating boxes of text flashing across the speakers' faces every few seconds, stating alternately 'ZO IS ER MAAR ÉÉN' ('there is only one [i.e. party] like this') and 'GEGARANDEERD VVD!' ('guaranteed VVD!'). LN, by contrast, tended to leave its subtitles saying 'Leefbaar Nederland' or 'Fred Teeven' on the screen for a minute or more at a time, and these were only transcribed each time they changed. However, it could be argued that the VVD's boxes were more visually prominent and that transcribing each occurrence was a reasonable representation of this.

7.3.3 Spoken material

As with the written material, some of the speech in the PEBs was not included because it was considered secondary. For instance, if a politician was filmed chatting to colleagues in a meeting, this speech was deemed to be 'background noise': indeed such remarks were often not fully audible, or faded out mid-sentence, just as the full text of newspaper articles was often not fully legible. In the Dutch broadcasts candidates who were already sitting MPs, e.g. those of the CU, were occasionally depicted speaking in Parliament: again this was treated as background material and not transcribed. An exception was made when a portion of a previously filmed speech was clearly being used as part of the election broadcast. Such extracts were identifiable because the speaker invariably faced the camera and the extract was fully audible throughout, ending at a sentence boundary. This was the case with Balkenende, *lijsttrekker* of the CDA.

An orthographic transcription was used, with an attempt to represent speech errors and pauses, whether filled or unfilled. Other disfluencies such as false starts were also transcribed but repeated words or attempts at words were 'commented out' so as not to skew the statistics. Audible pauses were represented by (.) and longer pauses by (..). These were not timed and are therefore somewhat subjectively transcribed. I considered that pausing behaviour, along with hesitation phenomena and speech errors, provided a good indication of the extent to which the speaker was following a script. Presence of pausing did not necessarily indicate absence of scripting; on the contrary, the pausing

behaviour of Thom de Graaf, *lijsttrekker* of D66, has clearly been carefully crafted. He produces five successive sentences which are exactly parallel in syntax, each beginning 'omdat' ('because') leading into a subordinate clause; then an audible pause; then the main clause with a further pause between phrases. For example:

> Omdat iedereen verschillend is, (.) hebben WIJ het voor u mogelijk gemaakt om te trouwen met wie u wilt: met een man (.) of een vrouw.
>
> (*Because everyone is different, (.) WE have made it possible for you to marry who you want: a man (.) or a woman.*[9])
>
> (de Graaf, D66, broadcast no. 5)

Syllables which received heavy stress were indicated by capitalisation. This was inevitably somewhat impressionistic. In Dutch the orthographic convention is to use acute accents for stress, e.g. 'dat was héél moeilijk' ('that was REALly difficult'); but in order to maintain consistency between my two sets of data I did not adhere to this practice, using capitalisation for both languages. Diacritics were only used in either language where they were part of the standard spelling of a word.

No attempt was made to represent regional accents (of which there were several) in either language: standard spellings were used. However, common contractions in standard spoken English and Dutch were represented in the ways normally used by native speakers. This meant, for English, that contracted verbs and negatives were represented as 'it's', 'aren't', 'won't', etc., while for Dutch such contractions as 'd'r' (for 'er' or 'haar'), "s' (for 'eens'), 'm'n' (for 'mijn') and "t' (for 'het') were employed. A number of the contracted forms in both languages involved pronouns: accordingly, care had to be taken when concordancing that all possible forms were included in the list to be searched for. This meant that for English, apostrophes were treated as punctuation so that 'it's' was two words; whereas for Dutch, the concordance software was instructed to treat apostrophes as diacritics so that 'd'r' was correctly treated as one word.

An attempt was made to record colloquial variant pronunciations. For instance, in Dutch the word 'goede' (inflected form of 'goed', meaning 'good') is often pronounced with a /j/ rather than a /d/ in informal speech, and there is a convention in Dutch orthography for representing this by spelling it as 'goeie'. If I had followed this convention it would have wreaked havoc with the concordancing,

since OCP would have treated the variant spellings as different words. My solution was to use the standard spelling throughout, but to indicate informal pronunciations in square brackets after the word in question.

The broadcasts involved a good deal of repetition both in speech and writing. This was treated as an intentional part of the discourse and transcribed as many times as it appeared. In the Dutch data, one PEB in the 2003 election (that of the SP) was virtually identical to the one they had used the previous year. Both were included, since in the UK data there were also broadcasts which shared identical material, particularly those of the Conservatives.

The transcription of all the spoken Dutch was checked - and inevitably corrected at numerous points - by a native speaker of the language with a background in linguistics.

7.3.4 Mark-up conventions

The PEBs were transcribed via a word-processing package into a computer file and converted into ASCII text for concordancing. The software used for this was the Oxford Concordance Program (OCP), a rather old but perfectly adequate package which permits the use of markup in the form of 'COCOA' references. These were indicated between angle brackets. The COCOA conventions which I devised were:

B Broadcast number
P Party
M Modality (spoken, written or sung)
G Gender of speaker

For example, my seventh PEB in the English data begins:

<B 07>
<P LD>
<M TX> A real chance for real change.
<M TX> Charles Kennedy

This indicates that it is broadcast number 7 and that the party is the Liberal Democrats. There are then two pieces of written text presented sequentially on the screen as Kennedy begins to speak.

Spoken, written or sung material which had been transcribed as context but was to be excluded from the analysis (see 7.3.2 and 7.3.3 above) was given an extra 'X' in the Modality code: thus SPX, TXX and SGX respectively.

When spoken and written words were being presented simultaneously, I presented them as close together as possible in the transcription, even interrupting spoken clauses with text in some instances. For instance, the ChristenUnie in the Dutch data uses several speakers in its PEB and consequently uses numerous subtitles to denote who they all are. At the end of the broadcast the 'lijsttrekker', Kars Veling, takes over the discourse again:

<G M> [Veling]
U ziet het: de ChristenUnie heeft veel bereikt.

<M TX> kars veling[10]
<M TX> lijsttrekker ChristenUnie

<M SP>
We zijn een snelgroeiende uitgesproken Christelijke partij (.) en die partij, die verdient uw steun.

(CU, broadcast no. 2)

7.3.5 Other transcription conventions

Pearce (2001, Appendix) presents his PEB data in columns, with a brief account of the "visuals" (e.g. "Blair in back of car: night") in the left-hand column while the actual text being analysed appears in the right-hand column. This is very helpful for the human reader, but unfortunately not conducive to automatic analysis. Pearce gives no indication that he used any corpus software for his 2001 research, whereas OCP was essential to the analysis of my PEBs. I therefore had to resort to a linear method of presenting everything recorded, whether it formed part of the material for analysis or not. Pearce's later research (2005) does use corpus techniques, and while he does not describe this aspect of his methodology I presume that he must have done likewise.

Square brackets were used to insert comments into the file, which would be ignored by the concordancing software. This was useful for making notes about distinctive features of each broadcast; for recording information about accompanying visuals or music; for indicating doubtful

passages of the transcription; or for indicating variant pronunciations. Comments were also used to indicate the name of the speaker where this was known but not stated in a subtitle. False starts were excluded by square brackets on the basis that the speaker had only intended to say the word once.

7.3.6 Abbreviations for Political Parties

The following abbreviations were adopted for use in the COCOA references encoded in mark-up in the files, and I will henceforth often use the same abbreviations for convenience in the text of this thesis:

UK Parties

CP	Conservative Party
GP	Green Party
LD	Liberal Democrats
LP	Labour Party
PC	Plaid Cymru (Welsh National Party)
SA	Socialist Alliance
SL	Socialist Labour Party (Scargill)
SN	Scottish National Party
UK	UK Independence Party (referred to as UKIP hereafter)

Dutch Parties

GL	GroenLinks
CU	ChristenUnie
LB	'Onafhankelijke Senaatsfractie', aka Leefbaar Brabant
SP	Socialistische Partij
D66	Democraten 66
VIP	Vrije Indische Partij & Ouderenunie
PvdT	Partij van de Toekomst
CDA	Christen Democratisch Appèl
DN	Duurzaam Nederland
VVD	Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie
PvdA	Partij van de Arbeid
NMP	Nieuwe Midden Partij
LN	Leefbaar Nederland
VSP	Verenigde Senioren Partij
LPF	Lijst Pim Fortuyn
NCPN	Nieuwe Communistische Partij Nederland
LR	Lijst Ratelband

7.3.7 Difficulties in Transcribing

Inevitably there were some unexpected complications. It was a reasonable assumption that PEBs would present one speaker at a time to the viewer, since the parties were trying to get a clear message across. This was not, however, entirely the case. The most chaotic broadcast was that of the Socialist Labour Party, which had a somewhat metadiscoursal style, consisting of footage of actor Ricky Tomlinson arriving at the studio to make an election broadcast and being greeted by Arthur Scargill and other party members. There was a great deal of informal chat and overlapping speech, which posed an extremely frustrating task for the transcriber.

Another reasonable assumption was that PEBs would consist entirely of adult speech. Again, there was an exception: the Green Party used several children, whose words were not always clearly articulated and whose English syntax and lexis were at times non-standard.

Regional accents posed a particular headache. Scottish and Welsh accents in the UK broadcasts did not present too many difficulties, since the dialect used was close to standard English (in the non-prescriptive sense used by Trudgill, e.g. Trudgill 1999); but the Dutch broadcasts, especially Leefbaar Nederland and Leefbaar Brabant, used regional accents combined with non-standard syntax and rapid speech. Portions of these broadcasts were indecipherable even to a native speaker/hearer, and simply had to be indicated as uncertain by the use of brackets and question-marks.

The resulting corpus of UK PEBs is provided on the CD as Appendix 7.5 and the corpus of Dutch PEBs as Appendix 7.6.

Notes

1. Facts and figures in this and the following sub-section are taken from the House of Commons website: http://www.parliament.uk.

2. The deposit is forfeited if the candidate does not poll 5% of the votes cast.

3. "The SP, which had a tomato as its logo, had in any case found a backdoor route to making advertisements for itself: as the Association for the Promotion of the Dutch Tomato, it offered the tip of the day: 'buy plenty of tomatoes'." (de Zwart 2001:56, my translation.)

4. Featuring a tomato, of course.

5. Or, to be precise, the first since the assassination of William of Orange in 1584.

6. This gesture was not as dramatic as it sounds, since of course the general election had already been announced and the government was by now in 'demissionair' (winding-down) mode. However, it did mean that when Fortuyn was assassinated, postponement of the election by several months was not really an option for Kok, since he would have been left with a government which had no real power to take any serious political decisions.

7. Curly brackets indicate optional elements which may be omitted.

8. This was just as well, since not all the graffiti was legible. This was also the case with some of the other written material: newspaper cuttings were not always fully visible or completely in focus. It would, in fact, have been impossible for practical reasons alone to transcribe and include all such material.

9. A reference, of course, to the legalisation of same-sex marriages in the Netherlands.

10. For reasons best known to itself, the Christenunie used lowercase letters throughout for proper names in its 2002 PEB.

CHAPTER 8: RESEARCH FINDINGS ON POLITICIANS' AND WOULD-BE POLITICIANS' USE OF PRONOUNS

> "We will not let anyone divide Wales, be it rural or urban, north or south, or Welsh speaker against non-Welsh speaker. The Welsh language belongs to ALL of us in Wales, and not just those who speak it."
>
> UK PEB no. 14, Plaid Cymru

8.1 Objectives of the corpus research

8.1.1 Research Questions

In order to formulate my research questions it is first necessary to group the political parties in some way. The spatial metonyms of 'right', 'left' and 'centre' have been in use since pre-revolutionary France (Beard 2000:6),[1] and will suffice here for want of a better system. I have, furthermore, distinguished the *degree* of 'rightness' and 'leftness' of parties in both countries. Thus the Dutch VVD and CDA are both labelled as right-of-centre parties like the British Conservatives, the main difference between the Dutch organisations being that CDA has a Christian ethos while the VVD is secular. I have also included the Dutch ChristenUnie in this grouping. The liberals - LD in the UK, D66 in Holland - are classed as left-of-centre along with the Labour Party and its Dutch equivalent, PvdA: arguably the liberal parties in both countries are currently to the left of the labour parties in terms of a number of policies, but we will not pursue that debate here. In both countries there are groups farther to the left which stood parliamentary candidates in the recent elections: the Socialist Alliance, Socialist Labour and Greens in the UK, the Socialistische Partij, GroenLinks ('Green Left') and Nieuwe Communistische Partij ('New Communist Party') in Holland. At the other end of the political spectrum there are parties which can be described as far-right (though not 'fascist'): LN, LB, LPF and LR[2] in the Netherlands and UKIP in the UK. The remaining groups consist of nationalist parties (Welsh, Scottish) in the UK and a motley collection in the Netherlands. While there are no nationalist parties as such in the Netherlands, I have included the VIP/Ouderenunie in this grouping since they represent an ethnic minority and might be expected to share some of the ideology - and language - of national minorities. Having included this group, which also claims to represent the aspirations of senior citizens, it is logical to include the other Dutch party for older people, the Verenigde Senioren Partij. I have dubbed this grouping 'identity-

based parties' as an umbrella term embracing nationality, ethnicity and age as a basis for political aspirations and activity. It could be argued that UKIP is better classified as a nationalist party than a right-wing one, and this will be considered when analysing the results of the linguistic analysis.

This leaves all the UK parties allocated to a grouping, and of the Dutch ones only Duurzaam Nederland ('Durable Holland'), NMP and the Partij van de Toekomst remain 'homeless'. DN, despite a name which apparently apes Leefbaar Nederland ('Liveable Holland'), appears not to share the latter's right-wing policies on immigration and law and order, so I have placed them in the middle ground, along with PvdT which appears to have some serious policies despite its frivolous broadcast. NMP, despite its name claiming to be 'middle', spends its PEB opposing increases in petrol prices and calling for restrictions on immigration, so I have classed them with the 'right of centre'. Table 8.1 shows the result:

	Far Left	**Left**	**Centre/Misc.**
UK:	SA, SL, GP	LD, LP	
NL:	SP, GL, NCPN	D66, PvdA	DN, PvdT
	Right	**Identity-based**	**Far Right**
UK:	CP	SN, PC	UK
NL:	CDA, VVD, CU, NMP	VIP, VSP	LB, LN, LPF, LR

Table 8.1 Groupings of political parties

On the basis of these groupings, it is possible to state my research questions in the following terms:

(1) In general, what patterns of pronoun usage emerge from the corpora and what differences do these illustrate between the parties?

(2) On the evidence of these corpora, do all parties exploit the use of pronouns to the same extent?

(3) Do political novices show themselves to be just as capable of devious pronoun usage as hardened politicians?

8.1.2 Hypotheses

(1) Far-left parties would tend to use 'we' (etc.) on a class basis, to denote 'ordinary' or 'working-class' people, assumed to include the viewer, as opposed to 'they' (etc.), the rich or the bosses. (I am using 'class' here in a sense closer to the Marxist use of the term, i.e. "social forces which occupy different positions in economic production, which have different and antagonistic interests" (Fairclough 2001:6), as opposed to the use typical in sociolinguistics which Fairclough argues would be "better referred to as 'social strata'".)

(2) Right-wing parties would tend to use 'they' (etc.) to denote potential immigrants or asylum seekers, as part of an attempt to problematise them.

(3) Identity-based parties would favour 'we' (etc.), including the viewer, to denote people of the same age group or ethnic or national background.

(4) The choice of 'generic' pronoun would be significant. Fairclough (2001:157) claims that generic 'you' expresses solidarity whereas "speaking on behalf of 'the people'" - which as we have seen is often done by means of 'we' - exerts authority. It cannot be assumed, though, that right-wing politicians will straightforwardly favour 'we': given that "One dimension of power in discourse is arguably the capacity to determine to what extent that power will be overtly expressed" (Fairclough 2001:60), we may well expect to see right-wing politicians use the 'you' of synthetic solidarity as well as the 'we' of presumptive power: Thatcher's brand of populist Conservatism achieved this "problematic mix" (2001:157) with consummate ease. Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that "plural pronouns of all persons can function generically with reference to 'people in general'" (Quirk et al. 1985:353): there is also the possibility of generic 'they', as in 'They say it's going to snow today' (ibid.).

The following two hypotheses apply only to the Dutch data:

(5) Left-wing parties would tend to use the familiar second-person pronoun 'jij' (etc.), while right-wing parties would favour the polite form 'u' (etc.). The two parties aimed at older people (VIP and VSP) would also favour 'u' since Dutch exhibits a non-reciprocal power semantic based on age (see Chapter 1 and section 6.4.4 above).

(6) LPF, being the only party named after a specific individual, and featuring that individual prominently in its broadcast, would exhibit a high usage of 'ik' (I) (etc.), as well as the expected them/us linguistic behaviour due to its anti-immigration stance. Annemarie Jorritsma of the VVD was asked, in a TV interview a few hours after Fortuyn's death, about the likely future of his party. She replied:

> Het was zo Pim - ik bedoel, Pim sprak ook niet over 'wij' maar over 'ik, Pim.' En die beweging wás Pim Fortuyn.
>
> (*It was so Pim - I mean, Pim didn't speak about 'we' either, but about 'me, Pim'. And that movement* ***was*** *Pim Fortuyn*.)[3]

8.2 Findings

Statistics for the occurrences of the various pronouns are presented for the English parties in Appendix 8.1, and those for the Dutch parties in Appendix 8.2, grouped according to their political ideologies as described in Table 8.1 above.

Some manual interpretation was necessary before extrapolating figures from them for the various pronouns, mainly due to the ambiguity of some of the Dutch forms. For instance, 'zijn' can be the 3rd person singular possessive masculine pronoun ('his'), but is more commonly the 3rd person plural present tense form of the verb 'to be'; while 'het' may be either the neuter pronoun 'it' or the definite article preceding a neuter gender noun. The non-pronoun usages of such cases had to be weeded out by inspecting the context in which the key word occurred.

8.2.1. Similarities between different parties and individuals

My main research questions were what patterns of pronoun usage emerge from the corpora, what differences these illustrate between the parties and whether all parties would exploit the possibilities inherent in pronoun versatility and ambiguity to the same extent to achieve their ideological ends.

The parties exhibited distinct patterns in their pronoun usage. If for instance we compare the two British socialist parties, the SA and SL, we find considerable differences between their use of pronouns, despite the fact that they are very close in their political ideology,[4] and that both broadcasts involve multiple speakers of both sexes. The SL has 6 instances of 'he' (etc.), one of 'she' and 6 of 'they'. Most of these pronouns refer to specific people who are being discussed, such as rival Labour Party candidates. There is moderate use of 'I'-forms (9 in all) and little use of the 'slippery' pronouns 'we' and 'you' (4 and 9 respectively). Of the 'you' forms, one is the discourse marker 'you know', three are directly addressed to individual interlocutors and the remaining 5 are unambiguously addressed to the TV audience. The 4 instances of 'we' are also fairly unambiguous: they are inclusive 'we's denoting ordinary people:

> We have seen industry after industry privatised, first by the Tories (.) and then by New Labour. In turn we've seen these industries (.) implement savage cut-backs ....
> (Scargill, SL, broadcast no. 3)

By contrast, the Socialist Alliance's speakers use no 'he' or 'she' forms, but 17 'we'-forms. Moreover, the meaning of 'we' at times means the SA but at other times means the country at large or the working classes:

party:

> We have NO rich businessman (.) or newspaper owners in OUR corner ...
> (Cecilia Prosper, SA, broadcast no. 4)

country:

> We're the fourth major industrial country, richest country in the world.
> (Pensioner Terry Rogers, SA, broadcast no. 4)

working class:

> You know, it- it is just (.) inhuman that the- that we have to- to live under such paltry sort of pensions, you know.

(Pensioner Terry Rogers, SA, broadcast no. 4)

The last two excerpts not only come from the same speaker but run consecutively.

A supplementary research question here was whether inexperienced speakers, and speakers who were apparently talking spontaneously, were as capable of using 'slippery' pronouns as experienced politicians and those reading from a script. Rogers' hesitations and false starts in the extracts quoted above suggest strongly that he is not a trained or experienced public speaker, nor is he reading from a script. Nonetheless he slides between different meanings of inclusive 'we' as effortlessly as Tony Blair or Margaret Thatcher. In his next sentence he uses an ambiguous 'we' which could mean pensioners or, alternatively, the country as a whole or its voters. He then shifts from this 'we' to 'they':

> **We** need a proper (.) universal pension paid by right to everybody at a proper level to keep **them** out of having to go to- to means-testing ...
>
> (Rogers, SA, broadcast no. 4)

One can only speculate as to why he does this. No doubt the shift is not a deliberate one, but perhaps at a sub-conscious level, as a pensioner himself, he does not want to be perceived as 'pleading poverty' by using the 'we' code to talk about means-testing.

8.2.2 'we' used on a class basis by the left?

I had hypothesized that relatively far-left parties would tend to use 'we'-forms on a class basis, to denote 'ordinary' or 'working-class' people, assumed to include the viewer, as opposed to 'they' (etc.), the rich or the bosses. I found some evidence for this. As I have illustrated above, SL consistently used 'we' in this way and SA use it this way some of the time. Meanwhile the government is sometimes referred to as 'they':

> ... and **they** TALK about (.) having a modern matron in order to sort of look at (.) cleaning and get cleanliness done ...
>
> (Karen Eisman, nurse, SA, broadcast no. 4)

However, earlier in the same sentence Eisman had used 'them' to refer to the hospital workers, and as we saw above, Rogers used 'them' to denote pensioners. It seems that 'they/them' can be just as slippery as 'we', and is used as such by the SA.

In the case of the Dutch parties, my hypothesis that socialist parties would use 'we' to denote 'ordinary working people' was not borne out. The SP's versified PEB did not use either 'wij' or 'zij' forms at all, while GL did not use 'zij' and employed 'we' apparently to denote human beings in general.

8.2.3 'we' used on a national, ethnic or age basis by 'identity' parties?

I had hypothesized that 'identity-based' parties would favour 'we' (etc.), including the viewer, to denote people of the same age group or ethnic or national background.

'we' forms are indeed much favoured by nationalist parties. A good example comes from Plaid Cymru:

> We will not let anyone divide Wales, be it rural or urban, north or south, or Welsh speaker against non-Welsh speaker. The Welsh language belongs to ALL of us in Wales, and not just those who speak it.
>
> (Broadcast no. 14)

Here the first 'we' is the party but the later 'us' apparently refers to all residents and thus potential voters.

In Beard's collection of slogans from eight parties contesting the 1997 British General Election, only that of the Scottish Nationalists used 'we' (Beard 2000:61). Unfortunately my own data from the SN was rather minimal, but even so there were 3 occurrences of 'we'.

UKIP, which may also be regarded as a nationalist party, has no fewer than 28 'we'-forms, almost all of which refer to the people of Britain:

> Already (.) **we** are losing **our** legal system, **our** pounds and ounces, **our** slaughterhouses and many other fundamental rights. **We**'ll also lose control of taxation (.) permanently, and even **our** pension funds will go to pay (.) for the EU's massive debts.
>
> (UKIP, broadcast no. 2)

The discourse of UKIP, including its pronoun usage, is remarkably similar in these broadcasts to the 1997 Referendum Party leaflet analysed by Beard (2000:22-25). This party did not take part in the 2001 General Election: UKIP seems to have inherited its mantle, and quite possibly many of its members and theoreticians as well. A typical paragraph from the Referendum Party leaflet reads:

> Already, **we** have seen **our** fishing industry destroyed and **our** businesses swamped with regulations from the army of unelected bureaucrats in Brussels.
>
> (reproduced in Beard 2000:23).

In the case of the Dutch data, 'we' forms occurred only 3 times in the VSP broadcast, one of which denotes the party and the other two the community as a whole - albeit an ageing community in one case. Thus there is no evidence of an identity-based 'we' here. In the case of the VIP, there are 15 'we'- forms, of which all but one referred to the party's policies and the remaining one was an inclusive 'we' referring to the party's ethnic identity:

> **wij** vinden (.) na vijftig jaar in Nederland (.) zijn **we** nog niet uitgerangeerd.
>
> (***We*** *believe that, after fifty years in Holland,* ***we****'re not finished yet*.)
>
> (Ed Blaauw, VIP, broadcast no. 6)

The first 'wij' here is the VIP, but the 'we' following it must refer to people of Indonesian descent, since it is they and not the party who have been in Holland for fifty years.

It seems, then, that political speakers readily use the 'we'-code to denote their national and ethnic identity, but - as we have already seen in the case of the SA pensioner - are reluctant to use it in association with their age.

8.2.4 Slippery pronouns: Who are 'we'?

All parties, with the single exception of the Dutch SP, used 'we' forms to some extent. Some used it exclusively to denote the party:

> **We** want to be in Europe, not run by Europe.
>
> (CP, broadcast no. 6)

> Ook vragen **wij** aan **u** kiezers: laat **ons** nu eindelijk de fileprobleem 's aanpakken.
>
> (***We*** *also ask of* ***you*** *voters: let* ***us*** *now finally get to grips with the problem of traffic congestion.*)
>
> (NMP, broadcast no. 12)

Even here, though, while the 'wij' is unambiguously the NMP, the 'ons' ('us') could be taken to mean that the whole country together must solve the problem.

The 'slippery we' noted by Fairclough in the speeches of Thatcher and Blair, and by Beard in the 1997 Conservative Party manifesto (Beard 2000:81-82), was much more common than the unambiguous 'we'. The "constant ambivalence and slippage between exclusive and inclusive 'we'" (Fairclough 2000:35) was much in evidence. A good example of a mid-sentence slide is found in the parallel structures produced by D66, described in 7.3.3 above:

> Omdat **we** allemaal een eigen gedachte hebben over hoe het moet in de stad, (.) hebben **WIJ** ervoor gezorgd (.) dat u uw eigen burgemeester kan kiezen.
>
> (*Because* ***we*** *all have [our] own opinion about how things ought to be run in the town, (.)* ***WE*** *have made it possible for you to elect your own mayor.*)
>
> (broadcast no. 5)

The first 'we' is an attempt to include the audience in the speaker's analysis; the second (stressed) 'we' refers to the achievements of the party. It could be argued that since these policies were carried out by a coalition government in which D66 was only one of three partes, this 'we' should be taken as referring to the whole government. I contend, however, that de Graaf is clearly highlighting policies that his party had to fight for.

In Fairclough's computer corpus of New Labour texts (2000:17 and notes), 'we' is among his list of New Labour "keywords" which "occur relatively most frequently [sic]".[5] My data show that New Labour do not have a monopoly on the devious use of this pronoun.

8.2.5 'them' versus 'us'

> "Political discourse is often constructed around the axis of 'us' and 'them'. In most propaganda, positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation are relatively unproblematic."
>
> (Pearce 2001:218)

Fairclough (2000:109) has referred to Margaret Thatcher's enthusiasm for juxtaposing 'them' with 'us', while Tony Blair tended to avoid these items, often by using nominalisations. I hypothesized that right-wing parties would tend to use 'they' (etc.) to denote potential immigrants or asylum seekers, as part of an attempt to problematise them.

There was no overtly anti-immigration party represented in my UK data; the British National Party, which did have a PEB in the 1997 election, did not manage to stand a sufficient number of candidates in 2001 to be allocated any airtime. I will therefore confine my discussion of this topic to the Dutch texts. However, there is an interesting instance of a British socialist speaker turning the tables in this respect, using 'they' in quite a confrontational way to depict the people who persecute immigrants - who, however, are also referred to as 'they':

> This government treats people who've fled persecution and torture in their OWN country (.) in much the same way that they were treated before: **they** lock them up, **they** refuse them support, **they** leave them without the means to work ...
>
> (Louise Christian, SA, broadcast no. 4)

Although many Dutch politicians were fond of using 'wij/ons' ('we'/'our'), there was little evidence of a contrast with 'zij'('them'). One example did occur in the discourse of VVD, which certainly takes a right-wing stance on immigration:

> **Zij** kunnen beter helpen de economie in 't eigen land op te bouwen en NIET naar Nederland te komen
>
> *(**They** would do better to help build up the economy in [their] own country and NOT come to Holland.)*
>
> (VVD, Broadcast no. 10)

The VVD's PEB spends more time than most on this topic, and yet there are only three third-person pronouns involved. Closer examination reveals that the discourse denoting would-be immigrants or asylum-seekers is often couched in more subtle wording involving full noun phrases and relative clauses:

> Mensen (.) die voor **hun** leven vluchten (.) moeten we helpen. ... Maar ... er is in ons land geen plaats voor mensen die alleen (.) een beter bestaan komen zoeken.
>
> *(We must help people who are fleeing for **their** lives. ... But ... there is no place in our country for people who are just coming to look for a better livelihood.)*
>
> (VVD, Broadcast no. 10)

It seems then, that parties who consider immigrants as undesirable do not often refer to them simply as 'they': rather, they are 'degenen die de regels overtreden, die hun papieren verscheuren, die tegenwerken' ('people who break the rules, who tear up their papers, who cause disruption'). (VVD, Broadcast no. 10)

Even the notorious anti-immigrant Pim Fortuyn (who incidentally includes a black speaker, Joao Varela, in his broadcast saying how it is worth taking the trouble to become properly Dutch), does not dismiss immigrants as 'zij'. He personifies the typical immigrant as a single male:[6]

> We nemen het NIEmand kwalijk dat **hij** hier **zijn** heil komt zoeken.
>
> *(We don't blame ANYone for coming here to seek **his** fortune.)*
>
> (LPF, Broadcast no. 15)

We may note, in passing, that none of the speakers in either the English or the Dutch broadcasts personifies any hypothetical person as a female: the pronouns 'she/her/hers' ('zij/ze/haar') are in short supply in these texts.

Not only was there a dearth of 'them'-lexis to refer to immigrants in the discourse of right-wing parties, but 'them'-lexis was generally absent in allusions to opposition parties or their supporters. Pearce suggests one reason for this in the case of New Labour:

> "[I]t is perhaps more difficult to make direct attacks on the policies and political ideologies of your opponents using the genre of 'biographical portrait', because the demands for narrative and intimacy could unsettle the audience and undermine the function of the piece, which is to generate a positive response to the party leader. Therefore more subtle strategies are used to describe opponents (and to present Blair and his party's policies and achievements positively)."
>
> (Pearce 2001:218)

8.2.6 Use of 'ik' and 'I'

I had hypothesized that LPF, being the only party named after a specific individual, and featuring that individual prominently in its broadcast, would exhibit a high usage of 'ik' ('I') and other first-person forms compared to other parties.

In the Dutch data, first person singular pronouns were totally absent from the PEBs of VVD, SP, PvdA, D66 and CDA. The VSP only used them in hypothetical examples about what a typical pensioner might say. The highest numbers of 'ik' usage were in LN and LB, with 14 and 12 occurrences of 'ik' and 1 and 5 other 1st person singular forms respectively. However, these were almost entirely attributable to 'sound bites' from 'ordinary voters' speaking about their experiences of crime or housing problems. This is an interesting example of what Fairclough (1995b:164) terms "lifeworld" discourses: "discourses of ordinary life and ordinary experience" as contrasted with "official" discourses of public life. Pearce (2001:214) comments that the use of "lifeworld" discourses is "one of the ways in which Blair presents himself as 'ordinary', but his examples involve contracted verb forms and colloquial expressions in Blair's own speech in a PEB rather than handing the microphone to members of the electorate. Pearce says of Blair's "lifeworld" discourse:

> "It makes a solidarity claim by expressing what is generally regarded as a widely held view, in language which 'accommodates' towards the speech of many audience members."
>
> (Pearce 2001:214)

We may conclude, then, that it is not only 'you' and 'we' which constitute 'solidarity' items: 'I' can also evoke solidarity when it is placed in the mouth of someone with whom the listener is expected to identify, who is not necessarily the politician asking for the listener's vote.

As far as the *lijsttrekkers* are concerned, Fortuyn does not have such a high usage: only two of the 6 instances in his PEB are actually uttered by him. One of these, however, is striking: 'Het is ZIJ of IK' *('it is THEM or ME')*, with heavy stress on both pronouns. With hindsight, this was a rather chilling pronouncement: 'they' seem to have prevailed.

If egotism is to be judged by abundant 1st person pronoun usage then Rösenmuller of Groenlinks must take the prize, with 3 occurrences of 'ik' and 5 of 'mij' ('me'). Duurzaam Nederland has a similar number, but this is spread across three speakers.

When we come to look at the British data we find that the Scots nationalists do not use any 1st person singular (1Ps) forms, but then their PEB is a minimal one with only 65 words. The data from Plaid Cymru is more reliable: they do not use any 1Ps forms either in their 1,544 words spanning three separate broadcast. UKIP uses 'I' only once. Thus, it seems that 'I'/'me' is not a form favoured by nationalists: as we have seen, they prefer 'we'.

Somewhat surprisingly, the British socialists SA and SL have a high usage of 'I', with 13 and 6 respectively (3 and 3 for other 1Ps forms). However, this is mainly due to a variety of individuals talking about their personal experiences, similar to LN and LB in the Dutch data (see above). The Conservatives, by contrast, use only 3 'I's and one 'me' in 3 broadcasts (689 words). While Charles Kennedy of the Liberal Democrats uses 9 'I's and 3 'my's, the runaway winner is the Labour Party with 36 'I's and 9 other 1Ps forms. Even more strikingly, all 32 'I's, 5 'me's and 2 'my's which come from Tony Blair's mouth are from one broadcast, the one in which he is shown talking to teachers and pupils in a junior school in his Sedgefield constituency:

> **I**'m still an optimist. **I**'m still basically somebody who (.) believes in the power of politics to change things ...
>
> (LP, broadcast no. 10)

This may be compared to Blair's speech to the 1997 Labour Party conference, just after the 'landslide' victory in the General Election. Here Blair makes frequent use of 'I' in describing his vision for the country, and Fairclough comments:

> "The values of the Party are transposed into the aspirations and commitment of the leader who comes across (in the Thatcher vein) as a 'conviction politician'."
> (Fairclough 2000:111).

This contrasts dramatically with broadcast no. 15, where again all the speech is from Blair, and yet not a single 1st person singular form is used. This broadcast is about the unsung "heroes" of Blair's Britain and what 'we' can do to reward 'them'.

Fairclough's New Labour corpus reveals Blair's personal style as exhibiting "A rather typical oscillation between personal and impersonal sentences" (Fairclough 2000:37). More precisely, there is a three-way distinction: Blair "shifts between speaking impersonally, speaking personally in the sense of on his own behalf, and speaking on behalf of 'us'" (ibid.; cf pp. 100-101). The oscillation, e.g. between 'the Government' and 'we' in a Green Paper on 'welfare-to-work' policies, is seen by Fairclough (2000:137) as "an aspect of the promotional character of the genre". My own data appear to contradict this: in the PEBs, which are surely the promotional genre *par excellence* in politics, there is little "oscillation" between 'I' and 'we' or between personal and impersonal: rather, each PEB seems to adopt a person-preference which it maintains consistently. But then, as Fairclough himself says,

> "A rhetorical style is not an invariable way of using language; it is rather a mixture of different ways of using language, a distinctive repertoire".
> (Fairclough 2000:96)

If we apply this to pronoun usage we could argue that the 'I' discourse, the 'we' discourse, the 'impersonal' discourse and the mixed discourse described by Fairclough involving constant switching between these forms, are all components of Tony Blair's distinctive political style: part of what makes him a successful orator is the communicative competence which enables him to adopt the appropriate variety for each speech situation.

The data from the Labour Party serve as a salutory warning against making sweeping generalisations about the pronoun usage by a particular party, or even an individual politician, based on one broadcast. Unfortunately in the case of the Dutch data only one broadcast per party was transmitted, so this kind of comparison was not possible and the conclusions drawn must therefore be appropriately cautious ones.

8.2.7 'jij' versus 'u'

I had hypothesised that left-wing Dutch parties would tend to use the familiar second-person pronoun 'jij' (etc.), while right-wing parties would favour the polite form 'u' (etc.). The two parties aimed at older people (VIP and VSP) would also favour 'u'.

Despite the lack of within-party comparative data noted above, some tentative conclusions can be drawn about Dutch politicians' use of second-person pronouns.

DN does not use either form. Parties which only use the informal 'jij/je' and never the formal 'u' are GroenLinks, SP, PvdA and VSP. The first three of these are left-wing parties to some degree or other, so this result is to be expected. VSP is the exception: older people are conventionally addressed as 'u' so the occurrence of one 'je' and no 'u' variants is surprising. However, on closer inspection the female *lijsttrekker*'s 'je' is of the generic variety and is not directly addressed to her audience:

> ... en dan krijg **je** van die (.) helemaal (.) doodstille wijken waar niets meer te doen is, niets meer te koop is.
>
> *(... and then **you** get those deadly quiet neighbourhoods where there is nothing left to do, nothing left to buy.)*
>
> (VSP, broadcast no. 14)

Conversely, parties which only use 'u' and never 'jij' are VIP (the Indonesian senior citizens' party), D66 and LPF. These results are predictable on the grounds of age, in the case of VIP, and ideology in the case of the other two.

All the other parties use a mixture of both forms, probably because they are hedging their bets and want to appeal to both younger and older voters, while claiming to take the political 'middle ground' and not being seen as too right- or left-wing:

> We hopen (.) dat de jongeren van **u** bereid zijn financieel bij te dragen aan die toenemende kosten van zorg en AOW.
>
> *(We hope that the younger people among **you** are prepared to contribute financially to those increasing costs of welfare and pensions.)*
>
> (VVD, broadcast no. 10)

This is a good example of a piece of discourse aimed at both young and old: the 'u' form is chosen as a default used to include both, since older viewers might be offended at being addressed as 'jullie' (plural form of 'jij').

There is another reason why politicians might prefer the *V* form 'u': it is grammatically ambiguous between singular and plural, whereas in Dutch *T* is differentiated into singular 'je'/'jij' and plural 'jullie'. Here, then, is another variety of slipperiness: Dutch 'u' can be used like English 'you' to convey "a sense that 'you' is not just the single reader but also everyone in the country" (Beard 2000:24). Just as supposed 1st person plural 'we' can slide between including and excluding the 2nd and/or 3rd persons, supposed 2nd person 'you' can slide between including and excluding the 1st and/or 3rd persons.

Interestingly, in the case of the VVD, all but one of the informal 'je' forms come from written text displayed on the screen:

> BIJ WIE KUN **JE JE** VEILIG VOELEN?
> *(With whom can **you** feel safe?)*
>
> (VVD, broadcast no. 10)

- while the 'u' forms are from spoken discourse.

8.3 Summary

Fairclough's remarks here could have been written specifically to describe PEBs:

> "Party politics, in becoming increasingly conducted through one-way public discourse in the media, with advertising as its model, is increasingly retreating from two-way, face-to-face discourse. ... People's involvement in politics is less and less as citizens, and more and more as consumers; and their bases of participation are less and less the real communities they belong to, and more and more the political equivalents of consumption communities, which political leaders construct for them."
>
> (Fairclough 2001:174-5).

A significant part of that construction work is done by means of pronouns, and I hope that my corpus of PEBs has provided some insights into how this takes place. The constraints of this research did not permit full statistical analysis to be undertaken, but initial regression analysis indicated that the differences were statistically significant and that the political grouping of the parties was the crucial factor.

Some of my hypotheses were confirmed, while others were confounded. It seems that politicians of all shades are fond of using 'we' in a way which may be described as either creative or devious, depending on one's viewpoint. 'We' can exclude the hearers and stand for the party and/or the government; or it can include them and stand for the voters or even the nation as a whole.

Moreover, this ability was not restricted to experienced politicians or people reading from prepared texts: quite ordinary people participating in election broadcasts were capable of using pronouns in a 'slippery' way with apparent spontaneity.

It is not possible to predict which party leaders will use 'I' more simply on the basis of their political affiliation. Leaders of both right-wing and left-wing parties are apparently capable of demonstrating egotism through their pronoun usage; and perhaps more importantly, it was found that 'I' can be used to convey solidarity as well as power, especially when placed in the mouth of an 'ordinary voter' as part of a "lifeworld discourse".

There was some evidence for left-wing parties, at least in the UK, using 'we'-forms to denote the working class and 'they'-forms to denote the government whom they opposed. There was also support for the hypothesis that speakers are happy to use the 'we'-code as a marker of their national or ethnic identity, but not of their identity as pensioners or older citizens.

While there was some evidence of an 'us and them' mentality regarding people from other countries trying to enter the one in question, this was not necessarily represented by pronoun use. Would-be immigrants tended to be depicted through noun phrases, which were capable of being much more derogatory than a simple 'they' would be.

In the Dutch data there was a strong correlation between use of the *T* form 'jij/je' and left-of-centre parties. Right-wing parties and those appealing to older voters were much more likely to use the *V* form 'u', while a number of parties used a combination of *T* and *V*, apparently in an attempt to convey both respect and solidarity to their potential voters in equal measure.

Notes

1. "In the Estates-General, those who supported the King's policies sat on the right, while his opponents sat on the left. Thereafter the word 'left' has come to refer to socialist or radical groups, the word 'right' to conservative and nationalist groups." (Beard 2000:6).

2. Lijst Ratelband did not exist at the time of the 2002 election: it emerged in the course of the resulting government as a split from the disintegrating LPF and took part in the 2003 election.

3. This interview was broadcast live on the Netwerk current affairs programme on the Nederland 2 channel, on the evening of 6th May 2002; Fortuyn had been assassinated that afternoon.

4. In fact the Socialist Alliance wrote to the Socialist Labour Party before the election inviting them to participate in the Alliance (which was not a party as such but a loose coalition of groups around a basic set of demands). The SL declined.

5. Fairclough's account of how this list was obtained is somewhat opaque: he states that he arrived at it "by comparing three much fuller lists", each "based upon comparisons" between his own New Labour corpus and another corpus (2000:166, note 20). He further states "I have included in my list words that are common to the top sixty keywords in all three corpora". I take this to mean that the keywords listed occurred high in the frequency list for all the corpora examined, but that they were relatively even more frequent in the New Labour corpus. Token counts are not stated for any of the corpora used.

6. No doubt Fortuyn would claim that he was using the 'generic' masculine here, but the validity of this usage has been disputed and, I would argue, discredited, by feminist linguists for decades now. See, for instance, Miller and Smith (1976).

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

Brown and Gilman's (1960) analysis of "The Pronouns of Power and Solidarity" was a ground-breaking study, which nonetheless confined itself to the interplay between the *T* and *V* forms of the second-person pronouns in various languages. B&G thereby ruled out any examination of pronouns in modern English, which no longer maintains the *T*/*V* distinction; and their research did not extend to analysis of the much more complex interplay, which probably occurs in all language to some extent, between pronouns of different persons, numbers and genders. In this thesis I have examined some of the aspects of this interplay in modern English and Dutch and its implications for the acquisition and use of personal pronouns.

What I hope to have demonstrated is that the traditional model (2 number categories x 3 person categories) does not fit real language. Children acquiring language use pronouns in a number of ways which deviate from the canonical pattern. Contrary to received wisdom, my corpus data show that it is not only autistic children who 'reverse' 1st and 2nd person singular pronouns: it is a common stage for children between the ages of 1;11 and 2;5. Some of this is due to immediate echolalia: I have demonstrated that this, too, is not specific to autistic children. However, it may be true to

say that while *immediate* echolalia is widespread and may be found in children over the age of 5 years, *deferred* echolalia is indeed only found in autistic children.

As Jordan puts it:

> "It is clear that even if confusion over personal pronoun production is a normal stage in the development of personal deixis for some children, the children with autism are severely delayed in passing through this stage."
>
> (Jordan 1998:114)

The non-canonical pronoun usage by young children is matched by non-canonical usage on the part of their mothers. While most of my findings here confirm existing research, I have uncovered evidence of 'gender bias' in both English, a 'natural gender' language, and Dutch, a 'grammatical gender' one. Parents tend to personify inanimate objects to their children, and when they do so it is masculine pronouns which are used. However, parents of autistic children tend to avoid such personifications, perhaps because they sense that the children's impaired imagination will make it difficult for them to cope with such verbal creativity.

My data has revealed differences in the child-directed pronoun usage between English and Dutch mothers, and between the mothers of normally-developing, autistic and Down Syndrome children. One of the adaptive strategies commonly employed by mothers of autists is 'spoon-feeding' them utterances to imitate, but this is often unsuccessful and only results in confusing the child because he does not know which parts of the mother's speech he is expected to repeat.

I suggest that the concepts of power and solidarity have some explanatory force here. Pronouns used by mothers can be used to express either of these principles, and particular pronouns can slide rapidly between the two. 'We', the notoriously slippery pronoun, is a prime example. 'We do want to go to the pictures this afternoon, don't we?' ('we' = 'you') is a parental pronoun substitution expressing power over the child; whereas 'don't worry, we'll mend it' ('we' = 'I') is an expression of solidarity. While normally-developing children rapidly learn to understand the nuances of such pronoun shifts, they must be bewildering to autistic children, whose impaired 'theory of mind' leaves them at a loss to comprehend what the parent is intending, and whose literal use of language leads

them to look for fixed meanings in every word. Unlike normal children they cannot resort to eye contact and shared gaze to decode their mothers' illocutionary force.

Adult speakers can reference a whole range of contrasting entities by shifting their pronoun usage to exclude a certain entity at one moment and include it at the next. Person and number categories are not watertight: in fact they leak terribly. Just as 'we', a supposedly 1st person pronoun, almost invariably contains elements of 2nd or 3rd person or both, so do other pronouns regularly usurp the roles traditionally reserved for others. In some cases it is possible to express one's meaning using virtually any personal pronoun. The extreme case is that of 'generic' pronoun usage, where generalisations are being made about how people do, or ought to, behave, and the pronoun does not have a clearly identifiable referent at all. A politician calling for more police on the beat might express this in any of the following formulations:

(1) **I** want to feel safe when **I** walk down the street at night.
(2) **You** want to feel safe when **you** walk down the street at night.
(3a) **A person** wants to feel safe when **he** walks down the street at night.
(3b) **A person** wants to feel safe when **she** walks down the street at night.
(3c) **A person** wants to feel safe when **they** walk down the street at night.
(4) **One** wants to feel safe when **one** walks down the street at night.
(5) **We** all want to feel safe when **we** walk down the street at night.
(6) **People** want to feel safe when **they** walk down the street at night.

The differences between (1) to (6) above are differences of connotation and emphasis rather than reference. The speaker of (1) is claiming indirectly to speak on behalf of others, to have hopes and feelings typical of the average citizen; while the speaker of (2) presumes to know what his/her audience wants and thus to speak directly on their behalf. Examples (3a) to (3c) all use the third person singular, but the choice of gender produces strikingly contrasting impressions. (3a) is a traditional choice, a 'generic masculine' or as feminist linguists would put it an instance of 'he-man language': the speaker is likely to be an older male. (3c) is the modern 'politically correct' gender-inclusive singular 'they'. Observe, though, what happens when a generic *feminine* pronoun is used in this context as in (3b): I contend that it is likely to summon up in the mind of the hearer the threat

of particular types of violent crime which are of more concern to women than men, such as mugging or rape.

Even though the public are generally aware of the manipulative use of language by politicians, and interviewers occasionally challenge cabinet ministers with "who do you mean by 'we'?", the versatility revealed in my Party Election Broadcast corpora is impressive, and it turns out that aspiring as well as experienced politicians adapt their pronouns readily to the demands of this 'order of discourse'. As expected, 'we' was exploited by virtually all the parties with shifting reference, sliding seamlessly between party, government, nation and electorate; what was more surprising was the finding that 'they' could be equally versatile. It is not very informative, therefore, to characterise a political party as having a 'them and us' mentality; it is much more instructive to conduct an in-depth analysis of how its spokespeople deploy 'them' and 'us' creatively in the performance of its political discourse. In my data, the 'we'-code was frequently used by identity-based parties to denote the speaker's national and ethnic identity, while left-wing parties showed some tendency to use 'we' on a class basis; however, there seemed to be a reluctance to use 'we' to promote an identity based on age. Meanwhile less use than expected was made of 'them' to denote either the party's political opponents or groups which it might wish to scapegoat, such as asylum seekers: more subtle devices were found to be in evidence, such as singular pronouns and full noun phrases. 'I' tended to be avoided by nationalist parties, while parties of both left and right used it in their election broadcasts mainly as part of a 'lifeworld' discourse from the mouths of purported ordinary voters. As such, it appeared to be part of a strategy to evoke solidarity with the hearer, which was a somewhat unexpected finding.

In the case of the Dutch broadcasts a clear distinction was confirmed between *T* and *V* usage in the second-person between parties of the right and the left, and between parties appealing to older and younger voters. In general, however, considerable variation in pronoun usage became apparent *within* parties as well as between them: this finding served as a salutory warning that caution is always needed in drawing general conclusions about 'the style' of a given party. It may be the case that an essential element of a party's linguistic style is to *vary* its style to suit the perceived political climate during the week in question.

A study of this kind inevitably has its limitations. My choice of the CHILDES database for my child language material brought the benefit of large quantities of transcribed speech, but with it the risk that I might misinterpret the semantics or pragmatics of a particular utterance because I had not been involved in gathering the data in question. Although substantial, the resources of CHILDES are not infinite and I had to make my selection from the limited range of corpora on offer, none of which was ideal in every respect. I had to restrict my analysis to the speech of, and to, young boys because there was insufficient comparison material from girls, particularly those on the autistic spectrum. This was unfortunate particularly with regard to my finding that mothers in their child-directed speech tended to personify inanimate objects using masculine pronouns: it would have been desirable to establish whether such masculine personifications were just as frequent when the child was female. The Groningen corpus was rather deficient in both quantity and quality compared with the Manchester corpus, and no data at all were available for autistic children acquiring Dutch or British English. As a result I was obliged to compare autistic children in the United States with non-autistic children in England, which may have introduced confounding variables connected with varying dialects or childcare practices. Lastly, while statistical advice was sought and received, the kinds of statistical tests which would have been required on complex data of this kind were beyond the scope of this thesis. Given sufficient time and resources, all these limitations would be rectified by designing, compiling and analysing an original corpus which controlled for all the above factors.

Similar caveats need to be applied to the section dealing with political discourse, even though in this case an original corpus *was* compiled. While Party Election Broadcasts in the UK and the Netherlands are of similar lengths, the UK data permitted me to conduct some within-party comparisons for the larger parties, which produced multiple broadcasts. This was not possible with the Dutch data because each party is permitted only one broadcast for any given election. In order to obtain material in sufficient quantity, and more than one broadcast per party, I had to record PEBs from two consecutive general elections in the Netherlands. Because of the very dramatic circumstances arising at the time of the first of these with the assassination of a party leader, the political climate by the time of the second election was different from that at the time of the first one, and no doubt this had an effect on the discourses produced as a result. In addition, the transcription process proved a formidable challenge due to the unexpected inclusion in PEBs of

speech by children, multi-party and overlapping speech, and regional dialects which were unfamiliar to me. Given 'world enough, and time', an international diachronic corpus of PEBs could be built and checked by transcribers working independently of each other to ensure accuracy and consistency. Nonetheless the corpus as it now stands is available for other researchers to exploit, and it is hoped that when used in combination with Pearce's older corpus of British PEBs it will make a contribution to this hitherto under-explored genre of political discourse.

Much of this dissertation has been devoted to throwing stones at existing notions of 'plurality as a metaphor for power', inclusive versus exclusive 'we', and rigid distinctions between 1st, 2nd and 3rd person. I am conscious that while I have, I hope, succeeded in tearing some chunks out of existing edifices I have not yet been able to replace them with a more satisfactory model to account for pronoun acquisition and use in modern English and Dutch, and this is something which I would hope to develop in future work.

This study has ranged in its discussion from the language of children to that of prime ministers, and from Leo Kanner to Pim Fortuyn. Inevitably depth has to some extent been sacrificed to breadth, and many of the issues raised here could only be touched on. Every chapter has thrown up suggestive and intriguing challenges for future research, and it is hoped that both the writer and the reader - an 'inclusive we', if you like - will take up some of those challenges in the future.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 5.1
English language corpora in CHILDES

Corpus Name	**Salient factors for consideration**
Bates	US data; ages <= 2;4
Belfast	N. Irish data; ages mostly > 2;4
Bernstein-Ratner	US data; ages <= 1;11; phonemically transcribed
Bliss *	US data; ages > 2;3
Bloom 1970	US data; only 3 subjects
Bloom 1973	US data; only 1 subject
Bohannon	US data; only 2 subjects, ages > 2;8
Braine	US data; parental speech not transcribed; includes Hebrew and Samoan.
Brown	US data; only 3 subjects
Carterette & Jones	US data; ages > 6 years
Clark	US data; only 1 subject
Conti-Ramsden 1 *	all but 1 subject >2;4; non-diachronic
Conti-Ramsden 2 *	only 3 subjects; non-diachronic
Cornell	heterogeneous data comprising samples from other corpora
Cruttenden	only 2 subjects (twins)
Demetras 1 (Trevor)	US data; only 1 subject
Demetras 2	US data; only 3 subjects (working parents)
Evans	Canadian data; ages > 6 years
Evesyn	only 1 subject; no documentation
Feldman, A.	US data; only 1 subject; age <= 2;3
Feldman, H. *	US data; only 4 subjects
Fletcher	ages > 3 years
Garvey	US data; ages > 2;10; child/child dyadic
Gathercole	ages > 2;9; non-diachronic
Gathercole/Burns	Scottish data; ages > 3 years; non-diachronic
Gleason	US data; ages mostly over 2;3
Haggerty	US data; only 1 subject, recorded in 1905!
Hall	US data; ages > 4;6
Higginson	US data; only 3 subjects
Howe	Scottish data; ages <= 2;1
Isaacs	from 1930s publications; not in CHAT format
Korman	ages <= 1;4; child utterances not transcribed
Kuczaj	US data; only 1 subject; age >2;4
MacBates	ages > 3 years; not in CHAT format
MacWhinney	US data; only 2 subjects
Manchester	UK data; 12 subjects, diachronic, near-dyadic
Morisset	US data; ages mostly over 2;6
Nelson	US data; only 1 subject
New England	US data; ages mostly <= 2;8

Peters/Wilson	US data; only 1 subject; subject visually impaired
Post	US data; only 3 subjects
Rondal *	US data
Sachs	US data; only 1 subject
Snow	US data; only 1 subject; age >2;5
Sulzby	US data; ages > 3 years; not in CHAT format
Suppes	US data; only 1 subject
Tardif	ages <= 1;10
Valian	US data; only 2 samples per child
van Houten	US data; only sampled at ages 2;0 and 3;0
van Kleeck	US data; ages > 3 years
Warren-Leubecker	US data; non-diachronic
Wells	UK data; diachronic; multi-party discourse
Wisconsin	US data; ages around 1;6; no documentation

* In the studies marked with an asterisk the subjects mentioned here were controls for language-impaired children. I have not listed corpora in which all subjects were language-impaired.

APPENDIX 5.2

Dutch language corpora in CHILDES

Corpus Name	**Salient factors for consideration**
Clpf (Levelt/Fikkert)	NL data; 12 subjects; diachronic but only the earliest samples currently available; phonetic transcription
Gillis	BE data; only 1 subject; age < 2 years
Groningen	NL data; 7 subjects; diachronic
Schaerlaekens	BE data; parental speech not transcribed
Utrecht	NL data; only 2 subjects; ages > 2;3
van Kampen	NL data; only 2 subjects; pronouns already extensively analysed by Boezewinkel 1995
Wijnen	NL data; only 1 subject; age >2;7

APPENDIX 5.3

Generic **'epronouns'** file used to extract pronouns from English data.

An adapted version of this file was made for each child, which included the name and any nicknames for the child himself and for members of his family, pets etc., along with any idiosyncratic pronouns found from the wordlists for the child and the mother.

```
[names used for child and family members etc.]
auntie*
aunty*
dad*
doctor*
dr*
father*
gram*
gran*
great_*
mam*
miss*
missis*
missus*
mister*
mom*
mother*
mr*
mum*
nan*
num*
pa
uncle*
I
I'*
I\+*
I\-*
me
me'*
me\+*
me\-*
my
my'*
my\+*
my\-*
mine*
ye
yo
yo'*
you
you\+*
you\-*
you'*
your*
yous*
```

he
he'*
he\+*
he\-*
him
him'*
his
his'*
his\+*
his\-*
she
she'*
shes
her*
hes
it
itn't
its*
it's*
we
we'*
w'll
us
ou
our*
y'all
tehy
they*
them*
their*
self
selves

APPENDIX 5.4

Generic **'dpronouns'** file used to extract pronouns from Dutch data.

An adapted version of this file was made for each child, which included the name and any nicknames for the child himself and for members of his family, pets etc., along with any idiosyncratic pronouns found from the wordlists for the child and the mother.

[names used for child and family members etc.]

die
*eigen
ge
gij
ik
ikke
je
jij
jie
jou*
jullie
hij
ij
he
hem
hen
hun
ie
ieh
*-ie
*+ie
'm
men
me
mij
mijn*
m'n
zijn*
z'n
zij
ze
haar
hare
d'r
het
tie
't
we
wij
ons
onze*

U
u
uw*
*zelf
*zelfde
zich*
*mama
alsjeblieft
alstublieft

APPENDIX 5.5

Coding criteria used in analysing pronouns used by children and mothers in the CHILDES corpus.

General

1. Decisions to code as 'canonical' or 'deviant' were made from the point of view of which item an adult would be most likely to use to another adult in the same context.

2. Utterances were only coded as 'deviant' if there was evidence of a deviant use from either the linguistic or the non-linguistic context. Linguistic evidence includes the hearer's interpretation of what was meant as indicated by their reply; it also includes comments and coding tiers by the researchers.

3. Utterances by the mother to another adult which are clearly not intended to include the child were excluded from the analysis on the grounds that it was the mother's *child-directed* speech which was under scrutiny. Speech by the mother to other (young) children than the target child, e.g. younger siblings, *was* included.

4. Utterances by the child to people other than the mother were included in the analysis, on the grounds that all speech produced by the child was of interest and that the child (unlike the mother) was unlikely to vary his/her pronoun usage according to the interlocutor.

5. Utterances which purported to be quotations of what someone else had said were not coded as deviant.

6. Utterances which consisted of reading verbatim from a book were excluded from analysis since they did not reflect the speaker's own linguistic competence or choices.

7. Utterances which consisted of songs, nursery rhymes etc. being spoken or sung were included and could be coded as deviant, on the grounds that the speaker/singer might and sometimes did adapt the words from the canonical version of the song.

8. No attempt was made to count pronouns which had been completely omitted, because (a) it is impossible to instruct the computer to search for an absent item and (b) judgements about what has been omitted are inevitably subjective.

9. Immediate verbatim repetitions by the same speaker, with no intervening speech by any speaker, were discounted from the analysis.

10. The 'miscellaneous' category was used for actual forms which are not among those listed in the matrix (e.g. articles, prepositions, non-existent pronouns like 'youself'); and for target forms where there was ambiguity about what the speaker intended to produce. This 'dustbin' category was used as sparingly as possible.

Specific

10. Names of people, pets etc. were included in a category of their own (PN/PNg). Names of places were not counted.

11. Forms like 'Mummy' and 'Daddy' were coded as proper nouns unless they were used in a generic sense, e.g. 'that's the daddy', where they were treated as common nouns.

12. Proper nouns were not coded as nominative or accusative since children often use them as one-word uterances where it is impossible to determine their case. Possessive forms *were* coded separately.

13. Metalinguistic references to names, e.g. 'C is for Charles', were not included.

14. 'God' counted as a proper noun in 'God bless you' but not in exclamations like 'oh god!'.

15. Proper nouns were not counted as such if they were used as count nouns, e.g. 'Look at all these Snoopys!'.

16. Instances of 'it' forming a complement (e.g. 'that's it') were coded as accusative case, on the basis that the accusative forms 'me', 'her' etc. would normally be used in this context.

17. The "s' in 'let's' was coded as 'us', and the target forms it was deemed to replace in deviant instances were coded as the accusative forms of the relevant pronoun in each instance.

18. The 'je' in Dutch 'alsjeblieft' was coded as nominative since that is probably how speakers of modern Dutch perceive it, regardless of its historical origins. The 'je' in 'dankjewel' was coded as accusative, as was the 'you' in English 'thank you' and 'bless you'.

19. 'Thank you', 'excuse me', 'you're welcome' etc., used to prompt the other speaker or otherwise spoken in the 'wrong' role, were classed as miscellaneous errors rather than as 1st/2nd person reversals. The same applied to proper nouns in instances like 'alright Mummy' when spoken by the mother to the child. Other forms of prompting, modelling etc. *were* treated as reversals. The criterion here was whether or not the pronoun could plausibly be reversed: 'thank me' and 'excuse you' in English, or 'dank me wel' in Dutch, are not possible utterances in standard adult speech.

20. In the Dutch data, emphatic 'zelf' was treated as a separate pronoun since it can occur alone. 'Thijs zelf' in place of 'jij zelf' thus counts as two errors, equivalent to 'Thijs himself' in place of 'you yourself' in English. 'zelf' was assigned to first, second or third person according to its antecedent or other linguistic context.

21. 'eigen' (own) in place of 'mijn eigen', 'zijn eigen' (my/his own) etc., was classed as a miscellaneous error rather than an omission.

22. In the English data, entities which had no good reason for having a gender attributed to them were assumed to require the pronoun 'it' and any other pronoun was classed as an error. Toys which had a gendered name or which were apparently dressed as one sex or the other were expected to be 'he' or 'she' as appropriate. Thus by default a toy described as 'elephant' would be an 'it' but a toy described as 'Dumbo' after the cartoon character would be a 'he'. In Dutch, pronouns were expected to match the grammatical gender of the antecedent or referent noun. Occasionally there was an issue where a clash between natural and grammatical gender occurred: e.g. is 'het meisje' (the little girl) a 'het' (neuter) or a 'zij' (feminine)? In such instances the utterance was coded as 'canonical' if the gender produced was plausible on either criterion, consistent with the 'benefit of the doubt' policy which was applied throughout the analysis.

23. In the Dutch data, 'van jou', 'van hem' etc. were always classified as a single pronoun in genitive independent case, equivalent to 'yours', 'his' etc. in English. It could be argued that in some contexts the 'van' forms would be better coded as genitive determinative, but this complication was ignored.

24. 'van' followed by a proper noun was coded as a single item, 'PNg' (proper noun genitive) equivalent to names with the possessive '-s' suffix in both Dutch and English, except where the 'van' was not a possessive and would translate as 'about' rather than 'of'.

25. In the Dutch data, stressed and unstressed forms were counted separately at the raw analysis stage but their scores were added together in the matrices, e.g. 'jij' and (nominative) 'je', or 'wij' and 'we'.

APPENDIX 6.1
"Come off the fence now"

Report by Paul Mackney, General Secretary NATFHE
(Published by NATFHE on its website on 19/11/01.)

Speech to Trafalgar Square anti-war rally on 18 November 2001.

Friends, comrades, what a brilliant turnout. I bring greetings from the National Executive of the University and College lecturers union, NATFHE.

We were one of the first unions to oppose the war preparations and to oppose the bombing in Afghanistan. We were joined early on by the railway unions ASLEF, RMT, and I'm pleased to see that the support is growing against the war, in the unions.

We've seen the CWU calling for a stop to the bombing. The Scottish TUC calling for an end to the bombing. UNISON Black Members' Conference call for an end to the bombing. And we're asking all the other unions 'Come off the fence now'. [cheers].

Tony Blair urges us to remember September the 11th, and says this is why we are bombing Afghanistan. There is no-one here who supported the massacre on the 11th of September. But remembering the 11th of September gives no excuse, and does not justify the bombing of a country ground down by 22 years of war.

They tell us we are fighting for democracy against terrorism, that we have to carpet-bomb one of the poorest countries in the world, drop cluster bombs, release daisy cutters, displace millions of people from their homes, support gangsters and rapists and drug-runners to achieve this. Well I am not part of that 'we'. Nor are any of you part of that 'we'. This war is not in our name. [cheering].

Getting rid of the Taliban does not deal with terrorism or with the causes of terrorism. Bush and Blair's war has created more refugees, giving ground to a whole new generation of terrorists, made this country a target for terrorism. At home, it's led to racist attacks, particularly attacks on Muslims, a tightening of restrictions on refugees, internment, secret trials, and the suspension of the Human Rights Act. All in the name of democracy. At the Labour Party conference in his 'I vow to thee my country' speech, Tony Blair said 'Let us re-order this world'. I think we tried that, well we didn't, that was tried before. It was called The British Empire. Many of its villains are celebrated on statues around here Just over there you have Major General Sir Henry Havelock who put down the Indian Uprising in 1857 [booing]. A genuine socialist government would establish a statue to commemorate the unknown collateral damage victim. [cheering].

Before Blair starts re-ordering this world, he could try putting things right at home. The money spent on bombs should go on Education, Health, Transport, and Public Services [cheering]. We hoped that a second Labour Government with a massive majority would do this. We were told that Gordon Brown had a War Chest. Now we may have been naive, but we didn't expect that War Chest to be spent on a War! We're beginning to appreciate exactly where we stand with this Government. They always let you down. As one person wrote to The Guardian, even Mussolini tried to get the get the trains to run on time before he invaded Ethiopia.

The supporters of the war say 'well what would you do?' Firstly, sort out Israel [cheering]. Get them to abide by the UN Resolutions and withdraw from the Occupied Territories. [cheering]. Secondly, recognise a new democratic state in Palestine. [cheering]. Thirdly, give massive aid to the people of Palestine to reconstruct their homeland. [cheering]. Fourthly, support the democratisation of the semi-feudal states, the semi-feudal Arab states. Women's rights, Tony Blair, are as important in Saudi Arabia as they are in Afghanistan. [cheering]. And fifthly, stop the bombing and send massive aid to the people of Afghanistan. [cheering]. Now that's the sort of foreign policy that would put an end to terrorism, and the causes of terrorism. [cheers] This war is about oil, it's about control of the world, it's about assertion of US power around the world.

Thank you for coming today. The world needs to know that this war is not in our name. Stop the War now. [cheering].

APPENDIX 7.2

Distribution of seats following the general elections in the Netherlands of 2002 and 2003.

Party:	**2002**	**2003**
CDA	43	44
LPF	26	8
VVD	24	28
PvdA	23	42
GroenLinks	10	8
SP	9	9
D66	7	6
ChristenUnie	4	3
SGP	2	2
Leefbaar Nederland	2	0

The resulting coalitions which formed the government consisted of CDA + LPF + VVD in 2002 and CDA + VVD + D66 in 2003.

APPENDIX 7.3

Transcription conventions for UK PEBs

All broadcasts begin with an introduction from the channel's announcer, '{And} now, a Party Election Broadcast by <name of party>', and end with 'That was a Party Election Broadcast by <name of party>'.

There is an equivalent written introduction and identical conclusion for each broadcast:
'A Party Election Broadcast by <name of party> for the General Election 7th June 2001'

These standard spoken and written announcements have not been transcribed.

Written text has been included for analysis if:

(1) the words are presented directly on the screen, i.e. they are not part of filmed material. Subtitles giving names are included.

(2) the words are not quotations being attributed to someone else (e.g a newspaper or a rival party)

Concluding written material urging viewers to vote for the party or contact it has been included.

Where written text overlaps with speech, the written text is indicated at the closest clause boundary of the speech. Paragraph breaks within text indicate a new screen.

Speech has been included in the analysis if it is presented by the party concerned as part of their discourse and not as a quotation from a rival party or an 'independent' source. Where an 'independent' source is clearly fictionalised it HAS been included.

Heavy emphasis is indicated by capitalization. Overlapping turns are indicated by {}. Doubtful sections are enclosed in round brackets and preceded by a question mark; completely unintelligible sections consist entirely of question marks. Silent pauses (longer than one would expect in the syntactic context) are indicated by (.) for a short pause or (..) for a longer one. Filled pauses are transcribed as 'erm' or 'er' throughout depending on pronunciation. False starts break off with a '-' and are commented out with square brackets. Some conventional punctuation has been used to make the text more readable, but such punctuation does not reflect any speech phenomena. Paragraph breaks reflect a change of speaker, a switch between modes (spoken, written or sung) or a break in continuity within the same speaker, usually with intervening material - visual, musical etc.

Sung material has been included if it appears to be part of the broadcast. This is fairly easy to decide since the singer, or purported singer, is shown on camera. So for example the bus driver in the Dutch SP PEB not only sings but dances to the song, as do the candidates for the PvdT. In the English GP broadcast, a child is shown singing 'row, row, row your boat' at the beginning and the SNP broadcast shows a variety of people singing, or shouting, the word 'shout!' in time to the song. Songs have been considered 'background music' if:

(1) The song is not in the language of the broadcast. e.g. in the Dutch broadcasts the NCPN has a song in Spanish, and the LN ends with one in English. It cannot be assumed that Dutch viewers would understand these.

(2) The song fades out while someone talks over it.

'Background' songs have been transcribed, if audible, but marked with an 'SGX' code to exclude them from the analysis.

APPENDIX 7.4

Transcription conventions for NL PEBs

All broadcasts, apart from the 'spot-reclames' (paid advertisements) in the 2003 election, begin with an introduction from the channel's announcer, 'Nu volgt (or 'dit is') een programma in de zendtijd voor politieke partijen', and end with 'U zag (or: 'dit/dat was') een programma in de zendtijd voor {de} politieke partijen'. However, the name of the party is NOT announced: viewers have to work this out!

What appears on the screen before and after the broadcast differs slightly between the channels, but always has the words 'Politieke partijen' at least once, often along with a logo of some kind indicating the channel.

These standard spoken and written announcements have not been transcribed.

Written text has been included for analysis if:

(1) the words are presented directly on the screen, i.e. they are not part of filmed material. Subtitles giving names are included.

(2) the words are not quotations being attributed to someone else (e.g a newspaper or a rival party)

Concluding written material urging viewers to vote for the party or contact it has been included.

Where written text overlaps with speech, the written text is indicated at the closest clause boundary of the speech. Paragraph breaks within text indicate a new screen.

Speech has been included in the analysis if it is presented by the party concerned as part of their discourse and not as a quotation from a rival party or an 'independent' source. Where an 'independent' source is clearly fictionalised it HAS been included.

Heavy emphasis is indicated by capitalisation. Numerals are pronounced individually except where indicated, e.g. '023' indicates 'nul twee drie'. Overlapping turns are indicated by {}. Doubtful sections are enclosed in round brackets and preceded by a question mark; completely unintellible sections consist entirely of question marks. An element in square brackets beginning with '=' indicates a non-standard pronunciation. Silent pauses (longer than one would expect in the syntactic context) are indicated by (.) for a short pause or (..) for a longer one. Filled pauses are transcribed as 'em' or 'eh' throughout depending on pronunciation ('er' is avoided as this would cause confusion). False starts break off with a '-' and are commented out with square brackets. Some conventional punctuation has been used to make the text more readable, but such punctuation does not reflect any speech phenomena. Paragraph breaks reflect a change of speaker, a switch between modes (spoken, written or sung) or a break in continuity within the same speaker, usually with intervening material - visual, musical etc.

APPENDIX 8.1:
Summary of Pronoun usage in the UK PEBs

	Far Left		Left		
	SA	**SL**	**GP**	**LD**	**L P**
Total Tokens:	**831**	**793**	**597**	**1295**	**2139**
1st person					
I	13	6	2	9	36
me	1	2	1	3	6
my/mine	2	1	2	-	2
myself	-	-	-	-	1
we	13	5	6	17	26
us	3	1	1	3	6
our/ours	4	1	7	6	11
ourselves	-	-	-	-	
2nd person					
you	11	10	2	14	40
your/yours	3	1	1	2	4
yourself	-	-	-	-	-
yourselves	-	-	-	-	-
3rd person					
he	-	2	-	7	5
him	-	1	-	1	-
his	-	3	-	-	2
himself	-	1	-	-	-
she	-	1	2	4	1
her (acc.)	-	-	-	1	2
her/hers (poss.)	-	-	-	3	-
herself	-	-	-	-	-
it	10	1	7	11	39
its	-	-	-	-	2
itself	-	-	-	-	-
they	9	5	7	8	18
them	5	-	3	3	1
their/theirs	1	-	-	5	6
themselves	1	-	-	-	-

Centre/Misc. none	Right CP	Identity-based SN	PC	Far Right UK
Total Tokens:	**720**	**137**	**1599**	**782**
1st person				
I	3	-	-	1
me	1	-	-	-
my/mine	-	-	-	-
myself	-	-	-	-
we	13	3	22	9
us	1	-	2	3
our/ours	-	-	17	15
ourselves	-	-	-	1
2nd person				
you	6	4	1	1
your/yours	3	-	1	-
yourself	-	4	-	-
yourselves	-	-	-	-
3rd person				
he	-	-	-	-
him	-	-	-	-
his	-	-	-	-
himself	-	-	-	-
she	1	-	-	-
her (acc.)	-	-	-	-
her/hers (poss.)	-	-	-	-
herself	-	-	-	-
it	5	4	10	6
its	2	-	8	8
itself	-	-	-	-
they	3	-	6	3
them	1	-	1	-
their/theirs	3	-	4	-
themselves	-	-	-	-

APPENDIX 8.2:
Summary of Pronoun usage in the Dutch PEBs

	Far Left			Left	
	SP	GL	NCPN	D66	PvdA
Total Tokens:	**576**	**493**	**404**	**658**	**641**
1st person					
ik	-	3	1	-	10
ikzelf	-	-	-	-	1
mij/me	-	5	-	-	3
mijn/m'n/mijne	-	-	-	-	1
mijzelf/mezelf	-	-	-	-	
wij/we	-	5	3	14	9
wijzelf/we zelf	-	-	-	-	-
ons (acc./dat.)	-	-	1	2	1
ons/onze (poss.)	-	1	1	2	2
onszelf	-	-	-	-	-
2nd person					
jij/je	12	7	5	4	10
jouw/je/jouwe (poss.)	8	1	-	3	2
jezelf (refl./emph.)	-	-	-	-	2
jullie	-	-	-	-	6
jullie (poss.)	-	-	-	-	2
julliezelf	-	-	-	-	-
u/U	-	-	2	20	-
uw/uwe	-	-	-	3	-
zich/uzelf (refl./emph.)	-	-	-	-	-
3rd person singular:					
hij/ie	-	-	-	1	-
hem /'m	-	1	-	-	2
zijn/z'n (poss.)	-	-	-	2[1]	1
zich/zichzelf/(hem)zelf/	4	-	-	2	-
zij/ze	-	-	-	-	2
haar/ze/d'r (acc.)	-	-	-	-	-
haar/hare/d'r (poss.)	-	-	-	-	-
zich/zichzelf/(haar)zelf	-	-	-	1[2]	-
het/'t	-	5	6	11	10
men	-	-	-	-	-
plural:					
zij/ze	-	-	1	2	4
hen/ze/hun (acc.)	-	1	-	-	-
hun (dative)	-	-	-	-	-
hun (poss.)	-	2	-	-	1
zich/zichzelf/zijzelf/ henzelf/hunzelf/zelf	-	-	1	2	1

	Centre/Misc.		Right			
	DN	PvdT	CDA	VVD	CU	NMP
Total Tokens:	**415**	**672**	**655**	**770**	**790**	**509**
1st person						
ik	4	15	4	1	11	1
ikzelf	-	-	-	-	-	-
mij/me	1	5	-	-	1	-
mijn/m'n/mijne	-	2	1	-	-	-
mijzelf/mezelf	-	-	-	-	-	-
wij/we	10	5	8	14	9	7
wijzelf/we zelf	-	-	2[3]	-	-	-
ons (acc./dat.)	-	16	1	-	1	1
ons/onze (poss.)	6	-	5	2	-	-
onszelf	-	-	1	-	-	-
2nd person						
jij/je	-	2	3	19	2	2
jouw/je/jouwe (poss.)	-	-	1	1	1	2
jezelf (refl./emph.)	-	1	-	-	-	-
jullie	-	-	-	-	-	-
jullie (poss.)	-	-	-	-	-	-
julliezelf	-	-	-	-	-	-
u/U	-	1	1	2	1	6
uw/uwe	-	-	2	2	1	-
zich/uzelf (refl./emph.)	-	-	-	-	-	1
3rd person singular:						
hij/ie	-	1	-	1	-	-
hem /'m	-	-	-	1	-	-
zijn/z'n	-	1	-	2	-	1
zich/zichzelf/(hem)zelf/	1	-	1	-	1[4]	-
zij/ze	-	-	-	-	1	-
haar/ze/d'r (acc.)	-	-	-	-	-	-
haar/hare/d'r (poss.)	-	-	-	-	-	-
zich/zichzelf/(haar)zelf	-	-	-	1[5]	1[6]	1[7]
het/'t	6	2	5	10	4	2
men	-	-	-	-	1	-
plural:						
zij/ze	2	-	5	3	2	5
hen/ze/hun (acc.)	-	-	1	1	-	1
hun (dative)	-	-	-	-	-	-
hun (poss.)	4	-	-	3	-	-
zich/zichzelf/zijzelf/ henzelf/hunzelf	-	-	-	-	1	-

	Identity-based		Far Right			
	VIP	VSP	LB	LN	LPF	LR
Total Tokens:	**342**	**373**	**523**	**960**	**895**	**44**
1st person						
ik	3	2	11	40	14	-
ikzelf	-	-	-	-	-	-
mij/me(acc./dat.)	-	-	1	3	2	-
mijn/m'n/mijne	-	-	4	7	1	-
mijzelf/mezelf	-	-				
wij/we	14	3	4	6	6	1
wijzelf/we zelf	1	-	-	-	-	-
ons (acc./dat.)	3	-	1	-	2	1
ons/onze (poss.)	1	-	2	-	4	-
onszelf	-	-	-	-	-	-
2nd person						
jij/je	-	1	4	17	4	-
jouw/je/jouwe (poss.)	-	-	-	3	-	-
jezelf (refl./emph.)	-	-	-	-	-	-
jullie	-	-	-	3	-	-
jullie (poss.)	-	-	-	-	-	-
julliezelf	-	-	-	-	-	-
u/U	2	-	-	8	6	1
uw/uwe	-	-	-	-	2	1
zich/uzelf (refl./emph.)	-	-	-	-	-	-
3rd person singular:						
hij/ie	-	-	-	2	1	-
hem /'m(acc./dat.)	-	-	-	-	-	-
zijn/z'n	-	-	1	-	2	-
zich/zichzelf/(hem)zelf	-	-	-	-	1	-
zij/ze	-	-	3	9	1	-
haar/ze/d'r (acc./dat.)	-	-	-	2	-	-
haar/hare/d'r (poss.)	-	-	-	1	1	-
zich/zichzelf/(haar)zelf	-	-	-	-	-	-
het/'t	1	3	2	13	15	-
men	-	-	1	-	-	-
plural:						
zij/ze	1	5	2	3	2	-
hen/ze/hun (acc.)	1	-	1	-	-	-
hun/ze (dative)	-	1	-	-	-	-
hun (poss.)	-	-	-	1	1	-
zich/zichzelf/zijzelf/ henzelf/hunzelf	-	-	-	-	1	-

Notes to Appendix 8.2

1. One of these instances of 'zijn' is 'We kunnen 't met z'n allen veiliger maken' (together we can make it safer). The idiomatic phrase 'met z'n allen' here could be argued to be independent of any particular person: here the antecedent is 'we' so it could have been treated as 1st person plural rather than 3rd person singular.

2. I have classed 'een overheid die problemen voor zich uitschuift' (an administration which puts off dealing with problems) as feminine, because nouns for collective entities seem to be acquiring feminine gender in modern Dutch. In fact 'de overheid' historically did have feminine gender, but most current speakers of Dutch in the Netherlands are no longer aware of this (those in Belgium seem to have longer memories).

3. One instance here is ambiguous: 'dan moeten we ze zelf ook duidelijk zichtbaar maken' (then we must also make them clearly visible). It could be the 'ze' (norms and values) which are being emphasized here, but it seems more plausible that it is the subject, 'we', which goes with 'zelf'.

4. This is an instance of 'men beseft zich niet dat' (one does not realise that), which strictly speaking is ungrammatical since 'beseffen' cannot take a reflexive object. This construction is probably due to contamination from 'zich realiseren'.

5. I have classed 'de politie' (the police) as feminine, like 'de overheid' above.

6. The subject is 'de ChristenUnie', which elsewhere in the same PEB has been given the pronoun 'ze' (she), so I have classed the reflexive pronoun as feminine here.

7. Antecedent of 'zich' is 'De Nieuwe Midden Partij' which I have classed as feminine.

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(The CHILDES corpus)

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http://www.natfhe.org.uk
(National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education) This site was the source for Paul Mackney's speech "Come off the fence now", published 19/11/01, which is reproduced as Appendix 6.1. The NATFHE site has been subsumed into the UCU website (http://www.ucu.org.uk) since the merger of NATFHE with the AUT in June 2006.

http://www.nederlandkiest.nl
(information point for Dutch elections 2002 and subsequently)

http://www.parliament.uk/commons/PartyElectionBroadcasts.pdf

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